CASE STUDY: YOUTH PERCEPTIONS OF CITIZENSHIP

A Thesis

by

MARIE JOLLIFF BRYANT

Submitted to the Office of Graduate Studies of
Texas A&M University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

MASTER OF SCIENCE

August 2011

Major Subject: Recreation, Park, and Tourism Sciences

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Approved by:

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ABSTRACT

Case Study: Youth Perceptions of Citizenship.

(August 2011)

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This study examines the perceptions of citizenship of youth involved in a community civic engagement program. The UP-BEAT Youth Health Leadership program trained youth participants in public speaking, technology, youth mapping, leadership and government. The study gathered qualitative and quantitative information from the 18 youth participants. Data gathered examined youth perceptions of the characteristics of good citizens as well as how the program influenced youth understandings of justice.

Overall, youth in the program demonstrated a desire to facilitate community change through action, expressing ideas and engaging others. Minority participants demonstrated huge commitment to the program, engagement and social capital within their communities and a desire to participate in civic activities. Youth perceptions of the roles and responsibilities of citizenship were not highly influenced by justice. However, youth were able to recognize issues of injustice based on the new environments and new experiences they were exposed to during the program. Youth also found adultism which existed within the program and the environments youth interacted with a deterrent for civic participation.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

> It may be laid down as a primary position and basis of our system that every Citizen who enjoys the protection of a Free Government owes not only a portion of his property but his personal services to the defense of it.
>
> – George Washington

George Washington, the patriarch of the United States, was not referring to the need for a physical defense against foreign enemies, but rather a defense against Americans themselves. He proposes that the American democracy, based largely on the power of the people, could continue to function only as long as its citizens remained actively involved in its upkeep. The upkeep of American society may include activities of civic engagement such as voting, community service, public debate, education, participation in public associations, or seeking an end to issues of injustice, in short citizenship.

John Dewey (1946) in *The Public and Its Problems* suggests that the government exists to support communities and community members. Dewey (1946) declares that democracy is the idea of community life itself. The individual member or citizen has a responsibility to direct activities and participate in associations according to his or her values in support of the overarching community structure -- democracy (Dewey, 1946).

The thesis follows the style of the *Journal of Social Studies Research*.

Putnam (1995) asserts that the publication of *Democracy in America* by Alexis de Tocqueville in 1835, first acknowledged the relationship between a successful democracy and strong participation in civic society and public life. **"**When men are no longer united among themselves by firm and lasting ties, it is impossible to obtain the co-operation of any great number of them unless you can persuade every man whose help you require that his private interest obliges him voluntarily to unite his exertions to the exertions of all the others" (deTocqueville, 2003, p. 604). Associations of people create social capital within a community or networks of civic engagement that generate social trust, reinforce norms and a sense of reciprocity. Members of associations are civically and socially engaged within their communities, and community interaction promotes a sense of the collective good (Putnam, 1995). According to Robert D. Putnam (1993), students of new democracies have long advocated the importance of a "strong and active civil society" for the unification and ultimate success of a democracy. Post-communist countries have struggled to emulate the individual civic engagement tradition of the United States in an effort to strengthen their societies and lessen dependency on the government (Putnam, 1995). The strong tradition of civic engagement in the United States has contributed to the stability of communities through the development of strong personal ties to people and ideals.

The discourse of Washington, Dewey, Putnam, and de Tocqueville focuses on the responsibility of members of a polity, specifically a democratic polity, to be civically engaged in society for the purposes of upkeep and continual improvement. In short, the scholars are discussing the role of citizenship. Simply defined, citizenship is the status

afforded an individual as a result of membership to a particular community as the reciprocal right, responsibilities and duties as a result of that relationship (Hall, Coffey, & Williamson, 1999). Participation in associations, public life and civic engagement activities are the reciprocal rights and duties of citizens.

According to Putnam (1995), despite rising levels of education, which have been the best predictors of political and civic participation, American participation in government has continued to fall rapidly over the last generation. Wattenberg (2008), reports that American youth are less likely than older generations to report a sense of loyalty, pride or shared obligation associated with being an American. Voter turnout, perhaps the simplest act of civic engagement and citizenship, in the 1990s dropped by almost a quarter from the 1960s (Putnam, 1995). The rise of personalism, celebrating autonomy, individual rights and freedom in the 1960s weakened social commitments (Lickona, 1993).

Participation in religious groups, labor unions, parent-teacher associations and civic and fraternal organizations has also steadily decreased (Putnam, 1995). Strong group and community associations created by civic engagement activities have often been related with the control of social problems (Berry, 1992). Problems that could once be solved in communities through the good neighborliness and social trust created by participation in associations and civic engagement are on the rise. A report of the National Research Council Collection (1992) found that the United States is the most violent nation of all industrialized nations. The increase in violent activity has occurred along with the decrease in civic engagement. According to Lickona (1993), the

increasingly adverse environment is leading to disturbing trends in youth that previously may have been policed through citizenship or civic involvement. Examples include decreased civic responsibility, disrespect for authority and increased concern with self.

Youniss, McLellian and Yates (1997) suggest that an adult's developmental background directly affects commitment to partake in citizenship and public engagement activities. Youth participation in organized groups during adolescence is directly related to civic participation as an adult (Youniss, et al., 1997). Adults with experience in group work as youth are likely to have experienced a public culture with a collaborative spirit. In other words, youth participating in group activities experienced common ideals or goals and worked together to achieve those goals. Engagement in groups that are civically engaged can help youth to consider power as "an ability to act" and to experience what a group of ordinary people from a variety of demographics can accomplish (Boyte & Fretz, 2010, p. 77). In a highly privatized, consumerism culture, participation in groups provides education for democracy by emphasizing collaborative work over individual success and creating habits of civic engagement (Boyte & Fretz, 2010). Youth participation in groups introduces youth to civic involvement and citizenship during the formative stages of their identity, making it more likely youth will be engaged as adults (Youniss, et al., 1997).

In the year following the September 11, 2001 attacks on the World Trade Center, several pieces of legislation were passed to enact new initiatives in civic education to " improve student knowledge of American history, increase their civic involvement and deepen their love of our great country" (Bush, 2002, p. 1). However, these initiatives

paid little attention to the process of civic development in youth, teaching civic education and history largely in the classroom over tangible interaction in community or government (Westheimer, 2004). More recently, youth development programs outside the classroom, aimed at promoting the skills necessary for community and citizenship participation, have become popular. Many of these programs hope to increase youth citizenship by engaging youth in the community through participation in community service project. However, many of these youth programs decline engaging youth in projects or debates that introduce youth to conflicting opinions. To assess whether these programs can be successful and to move forward in the effort to reverse the declining participation in citizenship activities and created critically engaged citizens, we must first understand the development and formation of citizenship ideals during its formation: adolescence.

Youniss et al. (1997) described the formation of citizenship ideology and civic identity as occurring most strongly during youth participation in norm-bearing groups. Youth who participate in groups such as 4-H, scouts or the YMCA a more likely to hold leadership positions and or membership to local civic , service, religious or professional groups as adults (Beane, Turner, Jones, & Lipka, 1981; Hanks & Eckland, 2005; Ladewig & Thomas, 1987; Otto, 1976). Membership in groups allows youth an opportunity to consider issues of participation, justice, and their roles in change and improvement of their communities (Youniss, et al., 1997). During participation in norm-bearing groups or organizations, youth are given the opportunity to test ideologies in the development of personal ideologies (Youniss, McLellan, & Mazer, 2001). Therefore,

youth currently participating in a group or association must be examined and studied in an effort to better understand the development of strong civic identities and good citizenship within the group setting. This formation process may provide insight to the development of adult civic identities and have important implications for civic education. A detailed review of youth formation of civic identities may also reveal how youth have been educated and socialized to perceive the roles and responsibilities of citizenship, and how youth relate that understanding of citizenship to themselves and their actions. Most importantly, an examination of youth understanding of citizenship will give youth a voice, reinforcing feelings of empowerment and civic responsibility.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to examine youth participating in an established norm-bearing, (Youniss, et al., 1997, p. 621) civic engagement group. Norm-bearing refers to the ability of the group or organization to reflect societal norms, such as group work, differing opinions and consequences of action. The study will examine youth participating in the UP-BEAT Youth Health Leadership program, which seeks to improve access to physical activity in low income neighborhoods through advocacy. The study will attempt to describe youth perceptions of citizen roles and responsibilities as well as the context in which youth live as said opinions are being formulated during the development of youth participant's civic identities while in the UP-beat Youth health Leadership program.

Research Questions

The following research questions served to guide the study:

1. *How do youth participating in UP-BEAT's Youth Health Leadership program, understand the roles and responsibility of citizenship within their community?*

2. *How is youth participants perception and understanding of justice influenced by the environment of the UP-BEAT Youth Health Leadership program?*

Case Study

This study will attempt to capture the formation of civic identity of youth within a group setting, within the context of real life. As the study is focused on an explanatory and descriptive explanation of citizenship development within a specific context, it is best suited for a case study research design. Case studies are the preferred method of data collection when attempting to explain answers to "how" or "why" questions in a holistic and meaningful way (Yin, 2003). The case study method allows the complex social phenomenon to be studied in depth, using a full variety of converging evidence sources. The use of a case study allows the researcher to look at citizenship development of youth involved in a group within the contextual conditions in which the development occurs.

The case study utilized youth participants in the UP-BEAT Youth Health Leadership program sponsored by the Brazos Valley Obesity Prevention Network, an obesity prevention movement in Bryan/College Station, Texas. Youth participants voluntarily chose to be involved in the program. The program attempted to give youth a voice and engage them civically in their community. Participants were given the responsibility of evaluating access to physical activity within targeted neighborhoods within the community and providing recommendations for improvement to community leaders, such as city councils. Quantitative data, provided by the *Youth Health Leadership Program Self-Administered Questionnaire* were combined with specific youth voice opinions expressed in the qualitative data gathered through *Youth Journal Assignment Writing***.** Additional observations from youth, staff, parents and the community were used. The use of journals as a method of data collection was designed to act as a kind of self-administered questionnaire, providing a form of a structured interview. Journals provide the participants with a sense of anonymity as he or she will be less likely to feel pressured to impress the interviewer or peers (Bernard, 2000). These sources of data, along with reflections from adult group coordinators and written data from youth group activities were examined to form a better understanding of the formation of youth perceptions of citizenship.

Qualitative Role of Researcher

As the researcher and the program coordinator of the UP-BEAT Youth Health Leadership program, my thoughts and opinions are intimately integrated with the collected data and corresponding findings. As the program coordinator, I was primarily

responsible for developing the program curriculum, recruiting youth participants, organizing events, communicating with parents and running training sessions. As a result I built close relationships with the youth participants used in this study. I was keenly aware of their frustrations and successes week to week both in and out of the program. Despite attempts to analyze the research data in an unbiased manner, I can never fully separate my research from my knowledge and feelings about the youth participants.

In addition, I have a highly developed interest in citizenship and its importance in our society. I fully believe that a polity is only as strong as its average citizen, and therefore citizenship is a responsibility for the good of the collective whole. My background includes a conservative political science education that focused on citizenship as defined by ancient philosophers such as Plato and Aristotle as well as careful critical assessment. As such, I may hold a personal understanding of citizenship that reflects the idealized philosophical standards over the realities of modern society.

Significance

Literature and adult culture seem to consider youth to be uninterested and generally unengaged in citizenship. This perception often seems to be regarded as a phenomenon of recent generations. Youth often choose not to participate in adult defined measures of civic life. For example, according to Putman (1995), youth are less likely to read newspapers. Wattenburg (2008) suggests youth are less likely to participate in elections. However, are these indicators good measure of citizenship participation to youth? Or are such measures dated by adult perceptions? The maintenance and continual improvement of our society requires citizens who monitor those in power as

well as those without and assess consequences of decisions and actions. Youth perceptions of citizenship must be carefully assessed to determine if youth lack of participation in adult defined civic engagement activities means that youth are simply uninterested or if another reason constraints their participation in such activities.

This study attempted to understand the formation of strong civic identities and positive ideals of citizenship in the environment the development is most likely to occur. Youth groups and programs that engage youth directly in the community simulate adults citizenship activity. If adults are more likely to be involved in citizenship activities if they participated in groups such as 4-H or student council as adolescences (Youniss, et al., 1997), then it is imperative to examine the formation of youth ideals of citizenship and civic identity of youth participating in such a group. If a deeper, detailed understanding of the formation of strong civic identities and citizenship ideals of youth participating in groups can be obtained, opportunities could be created to encourage similar development in youth not participating in such groups.

Definitions

The key terms used in this study have been defined in various ways in the literature. Thus, definitions have been provided to afford the reader a conceptual understanding of their use throughout this study:

1. **Citizenship** – the status afforded an individual as a result of membership to a particular community as the reciprocal right, responsibilities and duties as a result of that relationship (Hall, et al., 1999).

2. **Civic Identity** - identification with a civic character that includes an awareness of political and moral dimensions of society and a collective orientation for active participation (Youniss, et al., 1997).

3. **Civic Engagement** – community service, political activism, environmentalism, and volunteer activities that provide needed services to community (Michelsen, Zaff, & Hair, 2002).

4. **Community** – locality that orders expectations based on a polity, economy, or society (Long, 1985).

5. **Justice** – fairness when used as a political construction in the confines of political, social and economic institutions (Rawls, 1985).

6. **Social Capital** –characteristics of participation in social organizations or associations, such as networks, norms and trust, that create coordination and cooperation for mutual benefit (Putnam, 1993).

7. **Youth** –time between childhood and full maturity (Soanes & Angus, 2004).

Limitations

The case study approach allowed the researcher direct access to events and behaviors that cannot be manipulated in the context in which they occur (Yin, 2003). Clearly, the small sample size of youth participants in the UP-BEAT Youth Health Leadership program created limitations in the ability of the findings to be generalized to other programs, youth groups or youth in general. Findings were limited to the specific

context of the UP-BEAT Youth Health Leadership program and the youth participant's surrounding community. However, the aim of the research was not to attempt to generalize data, but to record in-depth, explanatory and descriptive information about a particular "norm-bearing" civic engagement, youth group for the purpose of understanding how civic identities and citizenship perspectives are formed.

An unexpected limitation to the study was the low reading and writing capabilities of the youth participants. When formulating the study, the researcher did not know what youth would be attracted to participate in the UP-BEAT Youth Health Leadership program. The final assembly of youth participants included representatives a wide range of social, economic, and racial groups. Unfortunately, not all of the youth participants had been exposed to the same educational opportunities. Some of the participants from lower economic classes had unexpectedly low reading and writing skills. Youth with lower reading and writing skills found the use of a journal for data collection more of a burden than those with high reading and writing skills.

In additional, the study was limited by the difficulty related to defining the topic: *citizenship*. Not unlike other elusive words used to represent noble and often romanticized ideals, such as justice, love, liberty, or community, citizenship has many definitions that are often tailored for the purposes of the user. Therefore it was difficult to adequately measure youth perceptions of citizenship, as everyone has a slightly different understanding of what the word means.

Thesis Format

In Chapter I, I introduced the questions surrounded youth citizenship and defined the specific purpose of the research study. In Chapter II, I will review the literature surrounding youth citizenship, including: *what citizenship is, youth citizenship, barriers to youth citizenship, citizenship for special youth populations* and *educating for citizenship*. I review the qualitative and quantitative methods used in the study in Chapter III. In Chapter IV, I will review the finding of the study and finally Chapter V will discuss the implications of the findings.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

What Is Citizenship?

There are many definitions for term citizenship, and while the concept may appear straightforward, it can be deceptive. Not unlike other elusive words used to represent noble and often romanticized ideals, such as justice, love or liberty, citizenship has many definitions that are often tailored for the purposes of the user. However, if the term citizenship is to be used in any meaningful way, it is necessary to have a clear understanding of what citizenship is and its roles and responsibilities in the community.

In *The Politics*, Aristotle discusses the meaning of citizenship by comparing citizens to sailors and their vessel to the city-state (Aristotle, 1984). Every ship is run differently. Each has different rules, values, goals and needs. In other words, each vessel has a unique constitution that in some way shapes its sailors to behave in certain ways. A sailor is one member of a community aboard the vessel. Although each sailor differs in his capacity and level of leadership and responsibility, each sailor is ultimately responsible for the safety and well-being of the ship. Although the primary role of a sailor may be a captain, lookout, or an oarsman and so on, activities and responsibilities that a sailor does outside of his specific role as a member of the crew, such as personal health, affect the well-being of the ship. In this way, every action of a citizen of a city-state in some way affects the well being of the polity. Aristotle's description of citizenship, however, should not be confused with his definition of a citizen. He describes a citizen as someone who is or will be eligible to participate in deliberative and

judicial office. Therefore, if one is eligible to participate in deliberative and judicial office, then he should understand himself as a sailor aboard a ship (Aristotle, 1984).

Just as Aristotle suggests that sailors behave differently based upon the constitution of their vessel, the meaning of citizenship transforms as the nation-state or community changes. Nation-states and communities change based on their internal and external contexts. Therefore, conversations and understandings of citizenship are directly influenced by current events such as war, economics, racial conflicts, religion or even regional movements. Citizenship is operationalized differently based on these influences. For example, during the American Civil War responsible citizenship may have meant taking up arms in the fight to end slavery. In some circles of the American South during the Civil Rights Movement, good citizenship may have been considered protesting the integration of public schools. After 9/11 good citizenship may have included not questioning government action. When considering citizenship, it is important always to consider the context of current events.

Rawls (1985), an American philosopher and thinker on moral and political philosophy advises that citizens of a democratic system of government conceive of themselves as free and therefore, are capable of personal moral authority or personal conception of the good. As democratic citizens' conception of the good may change over time, their conception of civic identity as a free person does not change. In other words, people of a democratic society consider themselves free to form personal opinions of justice. Although opinions of justice are shaped by time and experience, citizen public identity does not change. According to Rawls, citizen's understandings of duties and

obligations to their democratic society are "self-originating" and based on the political conception of justice as fairness (Rawls, 1985, p. 235).

However, personal, "self-originating" understandings of justice and the responsibilities of citizenship may represent a minor portion of the population and are not adequate to support the needs of an entire polity. A polity, regardless of size and structure must have a shared understanding of morals or some common view of society and the world (Aristotle, 1984; Berry, 1992; Dewey, 1946; Durkheim, 1933; Wirth, 1938). The shared understandings or the collective conscious are common to all members of the polity and operalizationalize in the behavior and practices of individual members. The shared understanding will in some way be dependent on a shared locality or point of reference, making each community understandings of justice and citizenship responsibilities unique (Dewey, 1946). According to John Dewey, the purpose of citizens within community is to "share in the selecting of governors, and determine their policies" (Dewey, 1946, p. 146). In addition, a citizen has a responsibility to "share according to capacity in forming and directing the activities of the groups to which one belongs and participating according to the need in the values which the groups sustain"(Dewey, 1946, p. 147). In other words, within a specific locality, community citizens should be able to select leaders who align with the local desires and priorities. Citizenship, then is dual in nature, reflecting both how citizens interact with each other in society and how citizens interact with the state (Alazzi, 2009). Participation in citizenship is necessary in both contexts in a democratic society. A democratic government exists to serve the people of its community, and its purpose cannot be

achieved unless citizens share the responsibility of selecting its leaders and considering its policies and doctrines (Dewey, 1946). Citizens must be able to work in groups to recognize the needs of the community and develop methods to address them. A good citizen will find his participation in political groups enriching to other areas of his life (Dewey, 1946).

In 1994, Kymlicka and Norman marked a period of increased interest in the role of citizenship with their article, "Return of the Citizen." They suggested that the theory of good citizenship is in some way independent of the legal question of citizenship. In other words, one can be a *good citizen* without having the full legal rights of a citizen. Such individuals understand that their actions, whether political or not, affect the well-being of the society. Kymlicka and Norman (1994) also state modern people understand their role as citizens to be an occasional burden necessary to maintain the luxury of private life. In other words, they suggested that the modern American adult does not understand actions as a citizen to be in pursuit of anything higher than the rights and responsibilities required to ensure the luxury of private life. The authors suggested that the *good citizen*, contrary to the modern understanding, is self-reliant, concerned with the common good, engaged in civil society and critical of authority (Kymlicka & Norman, 1994). The good citizen works to achieve a better society rather than to simply secure personal rights.

Hall, Coffey and Williamson (1999) who conducted a study of youth citizenship in relation to place, space and identity, similarly advocated the dual nature of citizenship, defining two levels: the *narrow definition* of citizenship and the *normative definition*.

The *narrow definition* parallels the modern understanding of citizenship outlined by Kymlicka and Norman (1994) in that it does not strive toward higher social responsibility. The *narrow definition* is the legal membership to a specific government or political entity, and the rights and responsibilities as a result of the membership (Hall, et al., 1999). The *normative definition*, however, relies predominately on themes related to the ideals of the specific political entity. Citizens belonging to the same polity understand national ideals, creating a shared identity among citizens (Hall, et al., 1999). For Americans such themes could be independence, freedom, equality, or participation.

Hall, Coffey and Williams (1999) take the *narrow definition* of citizenship one step further, relating its meaning to a specific space and place. Citizens of a particular place or country have a shared appreciation about the meaning of that space. In other words, citizens of a nation have a common understanding and share the values of their polity, just as sailors have a shared understanding of the operations of their vessel. While Americans may not be as homogeneous as sailors of a vessel, they have shared understandings of the world. Shared American ideals require citizens to think critically about the implications of government actions on national identities in order to insure that government actions align with American ideals.

The discussion of citizenship quickly turns from the legal membership to a specific political entity or community and focuses on the rights and responsibilities as a result of that membership. In fact, many thinkers participating in the discourse focus solely on the role of citizen responsibilities. Similar to the separation of types of citizenship, Beauvais, McKay and Seddon (2001) discuss three dimensions of

citizenship which include: rights and responsibilities, access to rights and responsibilities and common identity or loyalty. A full citizen, then does not simply have access to the three dimensions, but actively seeks to utilize these dimensions. He or she is empowered by the dimensions to participation. “Being a full citizen means having the resources and opportunity to participate in different areas of life” (Beauvais, et al., 2001, p. 2).

Westheimer and Kahne (2004b) divided the facets of citizenship further, into three distinct categories. Their work also made an interesting assertion that teaching for democracy reflects political ideals and has political consequences. To demonstrate this theory, Westheimer and Kahne separated citizenship in a democracy into three categories: *the personally responsible citizen, the participatory citizen and the justice-oriented citizen*. The three categories were used to discuss and study the education of good citizens. In their (2004b) study, Westheimer and Kahne looked at the effects of citizenship programs for youth that were designed to promoted the three categories of citizenship. Similar to previous definitions, Westheimer and Kahne’s categories divided citizenship into levels of participation.

The *personally responsible citizen* obeys laws, pays his or her bills, and volunteers in hard times. The personally responsible citizen has high moral character. He or she works hard and believes in honesty and integrity (Westheimer & Kahne, 2004b). In short, a personally responsible citizen is a responsible person. However, Westheimer and Kahne (2004b) asserted that it is not enough to ask youth to be personally responsible citizens. They suggested that the *personally responsible citizen* would be a good member of any country or regime: The United States, Russia, or China. The

definition of the *personally responsible citizen* ignores the need for a common understanding of place and associated themes or values. Consequentially, it does not include the ability to think critically of government in relation to shared values. Citizens of a democracy live in a polity distinct from many others in that its power fundamentally rests in its people. In this way, American citizenship should necessarily be defined differently from that of other kinds of regimes.

The second kind of citizen Westheimer and Kahne (2004) discussed, the *participatory citizen,* requires an increased understanding and responsibility. The *participatory citizen* is an active member of the community, understands how government and other agencies work and organizes efforts to improve the community. The definition of *participatory citizen* in part encompasses the more traditional understanding of citizenship as it requires a basic understanding of government. It incorporates a shared identity and understanding of place by emphasizing a comprehension of government operation, shared ideals and a need to participate in community. The *participatory citizen* has motivation to work toward change in his or her community (Westheimer & Kahne, 2004a).

Finally, Westheimer and Kahne (2004b) discuss the *justice-oriented citizen*, linking participation with the pursuit of justice. The *justice-oriented citizen* extends citizenship from the micro level to the macro level by increasing the sphere of influence and participation from the community level to the national level. It also increases the concerns of the citizen. The *justice-oriented citizen* is concerned with addressing larger social problems rather than simply treating their symptoms. Of Westheimer and Kahne's

(2004a) the explanations of citizenship, *the justice-oriented citizen* labors toward the highest good and noblest goal. The *justice-oriented citizen* critically assesses authority, seeks out causes of injustice and tries to promote social change (Westheimer & Kahne, 2004b). That is not to say that the *justice-oriented citizen* does not pay bills or work hard, but in addition to being a *personally responsible citizen*, the *justice-oriented citizen* thinks critically about injustice and takes action. The *participatory citizen* is much like the *justice-oriented citizen* without the higher moral purpose. While shared identities of the ideals specific to a country are not specifically mentioned, it is implied that a *justice-oriented citizen* seeks the causes of injustice and promotes social change based on a shared value system that allows injustice to be defined and commonly understood.

Banks (2008) also created a typology designed to conceptualize the increasingly higher levels of citizenship based on the citizen participation in his or her responsibilities as a result of his or her membership to a specific polity. Bank's four categories of citizenship closely resemble the three categories created by Westheimer and Kahne (2004a) with the addition of a lesser category of citizenship, *legal citizenship. Legal citizenship* is the most superficial definition of citizenship. It is the legal membership to a nation-state and the rights and basic obligations (such as obeying laws or submitting to the consequences for breaking laws) of that nation-state. *Legal citizenship* applies to those who are recognized by the nation-state as citizens but who do not participate in the political system or community and social institutions in any meaningful way (Banks, 2008).

The next level of citizenship in Bank's (2008) typology is classified as *minimal citizenship.* This level of citizenship includes legal citizens who participate in local and national elections for mainstream issues and candidates. Clearly, *minimal citizens* must also be *legal citizens* to be able to participate in the political system through elections. The first two levels of citizenship in Bank's (2008) typology then are determined by an individual's legal status as a citizen.

The final two levels of citizenship in Bank's (2008) typology focus more specifically on participation in civic life over legal status. The third level is termed *active citizenship* (Banks, 2008). *Active citizenship* is to "support and maintain – but not challenge- existing social and political structures" (Banks, 2008, p. 136). Similar to Westheimer and Kahne's (2004b) *participatory citizen,* the *active citizen* participates in community and politics with action beyond voting and obeying laws. He or she may participate in rallies, demonstrations or discourse about an issue or problem in the nation-state or community (Banks, 2008).

The final level of citizenship in the Banks (2008) typology is the *transformative citizen.* The *transformative citizen* recognizes injustices and bases civic action of moral and principles beyond those currently supported by existing laws and customs. The *transformative citizen* works for change or improvement to current conventions and structures. However, it is important to note that Banks (2008) makes a clear distinction between the *active citizen* and the *transformative citizen.* The *transformative citizen*'s actions may conflict with existing laws and custom but will reflect an effort to change existing practices to promote improvement, social change and or justice. The actions of

the *active citizen* however, remain within the current social and political customs and laws. The *transformative citizen* then is concerned with promoting change by confronting issues of injustice, similar to Westheimer and Kahne's (2004b) *justice-oriented citizen.*

Levels of Citizenship

Understandings of citizenship seem to be divided into lesser and higher categories, implying that some forms of citizenship are better or nobler than others. All the definitions presented previously fit into one of three progressive levels (Figure 1). The first level is the lesser form of citizenship. It includes Westheimer and Kahne's (2004b) *personally responsible citizen*, Hall et al.'s (1999) *narrow definition of citizenship*, Kymlicka and Norman's (1994) *the modern understanding of citizenship,* Bank's (2008) *minimal citizen* as well as Dewey's (1946a) description of a citizen as one to participate in choosing elected officials. All the descriptions included in the first level

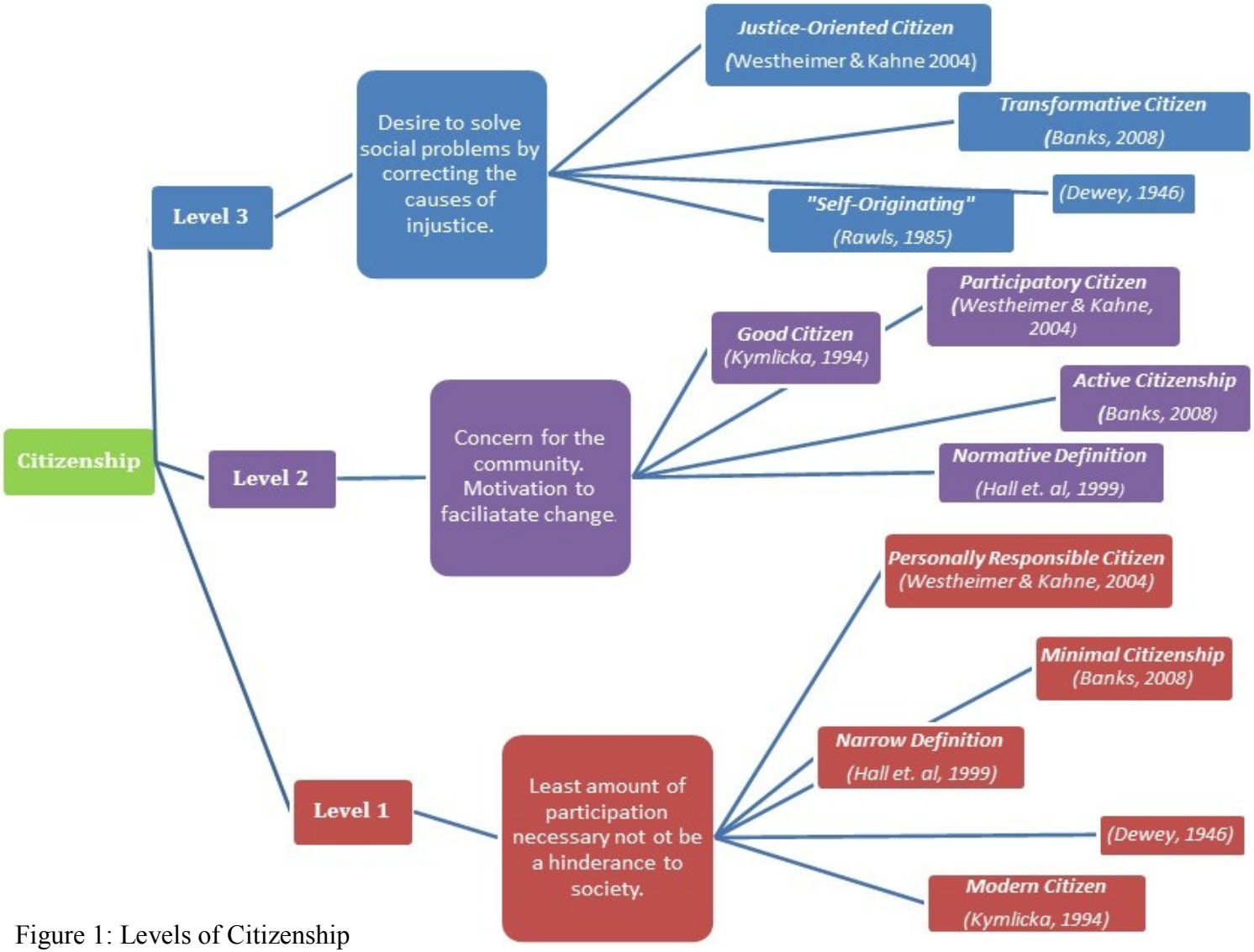

Figure 1: Levels of Citizenship

describes the very least amount of citizenship participation necessary for citizens not to be a hindrance to society: paying bills, voting in elections, obeying laws. The second level, including Westheimer and Kahne's *the participatory citizen*, Hall et al. (1999) *the normative definition of citizenship,* Kymlicka and Norman's (1994) *good citizen* and Banks (2008) *active citizen* takes citizenship one step further. It includes the personal responsibility of the first level, but also involves a concern for community and a motivation to facilitate change. Most importantly, the second level demonstrates a concern for the good of the whole based on a shared understanding of the meaning of community. Westheimer and Kahne's (2004b) *justice-oriented citizen*, and Banks (2008) *transformative citizen* stand together as a separate kind of citizenship in the third level. It is based on the pursuit of justice and the desire to solve social problems rather than simply treat their symptoms. Although the *justice-oriented citizen* and the *transformative citizen* clearly demonstrate the desire for the highest good, it may not be a realistic definition of citizenship for many citizens or communities.

Youth Citizenship

Citizenship is a role traditionally reserved for adults. Adults are considered responsible for their actions while children are not. Responsibility of citizenship for youth who are no longer children and not yet adults (i.e. adolescence) often remains unclear. Youth and adults alike may be skeptical that youth are full citizens (Beauvais, et al., 2001). However, citizenship is rarely discussed in literature in terms of age, but rather by specific qualities needed to be capable of participation. The implication may be that age in not a prerequisite for participation in citizenship. Rather age is simply a

prerequisite for specific rights given as a result of citizenship: right to drive, vote, and buy tobacco. Although youth may or may not be able to vote formally in governmental elections, youth citizenship literature agrees that as citizens, youth have certain rights and consequently corresponding responsibilities (Banks, 2008; Beauvais, et al., 2001; Hall, et al., 1999; Kymlicka & Norman, 1994; Wattenberg, 2008; Westheimer & Kahne, 2004a).

According to Hall, Coffey and Williamson (1999), citizenship status reflects the rights and responsibilities of the political authority as well as social and economic status. However, citizenship status may also reflect individual identities in relation to those three elements (1999). Clearly, youth are marginalized in their ability to fully participate in citizenship because of their limited social and economic status (Hall, et al., 1999; Kymlicka & Norman, 1994; Wattenberg, 2008). In addition, however, youth identity is generally more fluid and less determined than adult identity as youth marks a period of not only physical development, but cognitive as well. Consequently, youth are less likely to fully understand or recognize their personal values and characteristics. Youth identity responds more dramatically than other age groups to constantly changing and moving society (Hall, et al., 1999). Personal development and identity development may reflect current trends in technology, politics, pop culture, music, travel or literature. The malleability of youth identity affects views of issues central to citizenship (Hall, et al., 1999; Kelso & Cogan, 2008; Wattenberg, 2008).

One explanation for the lack of youth involvement in citizenship may be the assertion that the youth understanding of good citizenship has shifted from national

politics to a personally responsible, community based citizenship (Alazzi, 2009; Andolina, Jenkins, Keeter, & Zukin, 2002). This new understanding may or may not include activities beyond being self-sustaining, such as community volunteering. While the personally responsible citizen is self reliant and therefore, not a burden to society, Westheimer and Kahne (2004a) insist that any regime (democratic, communist, and socialist) would benefit from having personally responsible citizens. According to Westheimer and Kahne (2004a), good citizens in a democratic nation should have fundamental characteristics that separate them from citizens of other nations, such as being critical of authority and desiring to pursue justice.

In a study of Jordanian youth and citizenship by Alazzi (2009), the students identified four characteristics of a good citizen: helping others, obeying laws, patriotism and respect for others. In general, the youth in the study discussed citizenship in terms of virtuous character. Overwhelmingly, the students indicated helping others or community services as the main characteristic of citizenship, focusing on community over nation and service over politics. Although some students indicated that they would be voting in the future, almost none mentioned concerns or activities that occur outside of their immediate community (Alazzi, 2009). Alazzi's (2009) findings primarily reflect the first level of citizenship defined by Westheimer and Kahne (2004b), the *personally responsible citizen*. For the *personally responsible citizen*, perceptions of good citizenship are detached from political engagement. The only characteristic identified by the Jordanian youth that could be interpreted as a higher form of citizenship is helping others (Westheimer & Kahne, 2004a). Helping others fits into the descriptions of the

participatory citizen or the *justice-oriented citizen* depending on the motivation behind the action. However, regardless of what level of citizenship involvement the youth's responses indicated, citizenship was considered within a local community context.

Andolina, Jenkins, Keeter and Zukin (2002) conducted a national research campaign in the United States to determine the health of civic attitudes and feelings about citizenship in youth. The study results suggest that the reason youth define citizenship in terms of community over nation is that politics are not relatable to the everyday lives and concerns of youth, and consequentially they have little appreciation for the necessity of politics. Youth felt that being good makes a good citizen. Specifically, youth often equate citizenship with volunteering or community service. In their study of community volunteering, Omoto and Snyder (2002) found that the United States has historically had high rates of volunteerism compared with other countries throughout the world. Youth, when compared to adults, are often more likely to be volunteers and less likely to get involved in politics (Omoto & Snyder, 2002). The study by Andolina, et al. (2002) also indicated that youth understand that volunteering will not solve the social problems that fuel the need for volunteers in the first place. In addition the study found that youth are largely distrustful of political institutions which may be a result of parental cynicism and negative, sensationalized media coverage (Andolina, et al., 2002).

In a study done for the Youth Citizenship Commission in Great Britain, Tonge and Mycock (2010) studied youth to determine how youth define citizenship in order to better facilitate youth participation and determine if legal voting age should be lowered.

They found that for youth, good citizenship is to obey laws without any larger ideas of politics or justice (Tonge & Mycock, 2010). In other words, citizenship is understood as community service devoid of any political responsibilities. In general, studies suggest that youth seem to regard citizenship as being a good person or being personally responsible (Alazzi, 2009; Andolina, et al., 2002; Tonge & Mycock, 2009; Westheimer & Kahne, 2004b).

Barriers to Youth Participation

According to Kymlicka and Norman (1994), where rights are withheld or groups feel isolated from mainstream culture, individuals or groups are unable to feel like full members of society. Therefore, members of marginalized groups may feel incapable of acting as citizens. Due to a lack of citizen participation, Kymlicka and Norman (1994) advocated for the development of a theory of citizenship to challenge the current culture of citizenship. The current citizenship culture described by Kymlicka and Norman (1994) gives certain groups of people the power to participate in roles and activities over others by designating a mainstream and marginalizing minority groups, including youth. Citizenship requires specific like skills or qualities youth may or may not have. For example, in *Literature Review on Youth and Citizenship*, by Beauvias, McKay and Seddon (2001), they list three dimensions of full citizenship: *rights and responsibilities*, *access,* and *feelings of identity*. Youth have little or no economic power. They are also denied certain rights until determined appropriate. While the denial of certain rights until a certain age may be in the best interest of public safety and stability, it may produce

feelings of inadequacy and isolation from the main citizen body (Kymlicka & Norman, 1994; Thomson et al., 2004).

Studies suggest that citizenship in a democracy requires that young people behave as adults while in society they may not yet be adults legally or socially (Beauvais, et al., 2001; Hall, et al., 1999; Kymlicka & Norman, 1994). In order to be capable of engaging in a meaningful definition of responsible citizenship, a full citizen must first be capable of economic independence to have the freedom to engage in activities outside of providing for basic needs. Hall, Coffey and Williamson (1999) reviewed youth citizenship as affected by place, space and identity. They cited the changing youth transitions as a possible cause of civic disengagement. Youth transitions today are more fluid and open-ended compared to the transitions of past generations (Banks, 2008; Hall, et al., 1999; Wattenberg, 2008). Youth experience increased self-determination because of changing establishment patterns, combining dependence and independence in new ways (Hall, et al., 1999). Among U.S. middle class, pursuit of higher education and world travel at a young age is increasing, leading to protracted transitions to adulthood and a greater dependence on parental support or extended time living with limited financial means (Hall, et al., 1999). Youth dependent on parents for financial support, or youth traveling or living in new communities, are less capable of participating in good citizenship activities.

In a literature review on youth and citizenship, Beauvais, McKay and Seddon (2001) proposed similar constraints to youth ability to participate in citizenship. After completion of high school, many graduates who do not pursue higher education are

faced with little economic power, living with parents and working part time jobs. College graduates often face a similar fate, strapped with costly student loans and confronted with a limited job market that is often discriminatory based on age; an increasing amount of college graduates find themselves living with parents and working part time or in poorly paid jobs (Beauvais, et al., 2001). Due to the educational structure and cost, many young citizens are far from economically independent and consequentially may be only beginning to form an identity as an adult. Limited economic power, the common trend of continuing to live with parents, as well as the extension of the single, unmarried lifestyle has led some youth development scholars to extend youth to 29 years of age (Beauvais, et al., 2001).

Other studies have suggested that youth are often unable to identify with people, events and issues outside of their immediate communities (Alazzi, 2009; Andolina, et al., 2002; Beauvais, et al., 2001; Bobek, Zaff, Li, & Lerner, 2009; Hall, et al., 1999). When youth come to the legal age of full adult citizenship, they may not yet be economically, socially, educationally, or developmentally capable of accessing rights and responsibilities necessary to participate as full citizens specifically on the national level (Andolina, et al., 2002; Beauvais, et al., 2001; Bobek, et al., 2009; Hall, et al., 1999; Thomson, et al., 2004; Westheimer & Kahne, 2004b). The characteristics of young adult citizens may limit their ability to participate in full citizenship during the transition from childhood to adulthood. This is increasingly disturbing due to the modern trend to prolong adolescence and put off adulthood (Tonge & Mycock, 2009). The category "youth" has been sometimes extended, to include individuals as old as 29 or older

(Beauvais, et al., 2001). In order to understand the ability of young citizens to participate in citizenship, it is necessary to first understand how today's youth have been educated and socialized to perceive the roles and responsibilities of citizenship, and how youth relate that understanding of citizenship to themselves and their actions.

Studies abroad have demonstrated a similar issue: lifestyles of young voters do not yet reflect adulthood. Thompson, et al. (2004) attempted to understand factors affecting young citizens in the United Kingdom who like young American voters seem disinterested in their role as citizens (Wattenberg, 2008). While the United Kingdom has different cultural norms and government practices, influences on young people are similar. Thompson, et al. (2004) found that changes in modern society in the UK have created an extension of youth. The extension of childhood may be in part responsible for the younger generation appearing apathetic toward citizenship as characterized by participation in government causes and voting statistics. Entrance into formal adulthood is fragmented by the differing age requirements of certain rights, such as the required age to legally drive, vote, or buy alcohol. This fragmentation is intensified by the differences in economic situation and amounts of responsibility youth who go to university have compared to those who do not. University students are typically financially dependent and often indulge in unstructured 'party' lifestyles even after graduating (Thomson, et al., 2004).

The economic limitations to participate may not be the only consequence the extension of youth has on citizenship. Youth have a hard time relating to the importance politics and civic issues because much of the content is outside their sphere of

understanding and is irrelevant to their lives (Alazzi, 2009; Beauvais, et al., 2001; Finlay & Flanagan, 2009). As a result they have trouble operationalizing politics (Alazzi, 2009). Once youth enter adulthood and begin to engage in stereotypical adults responsibilities (buy a house, pay taxes, and obtain personal insurance), politics and government participation hold greater meaning. The importance of government and its role promoting respect, tolerance, justice and overall caring for citizens grows as youth slowly become invested in their communities as adults.

Youth, then, are generally handicapped in their ability to participate in citizenship because most struggle financially to support their needs and therefore have little time or money to put toward participation in government. They are unable to understand the important role politics plays in the security of citizens because they have not yet become invested in their communities and are unconcerned with the security of their investments. Therefore, many youth understand citizenship only within the context of community volunteering instead at the national or political level.

Special Youth Populations

Minority youth in the United States may have different constructs based on differing cultural norms and experiences on which to base their self-identity and consequently their understandings and beliefs about citizenship. Bogard and Sherrod's (2008) research in diverse youth and citizenship argued that citizenship in some way involves an allegiance to, a shared understanding of, and an identity with the laws and morals of one's polity, but that understanding will vary based on cultural norms. The argument demonstrates that minorities and immigrant groups have different relationships

with three fundamental associations: family, school and community (Bogard & Sherrod, 2008). In addition, studies by developmental psychologists have suggested that unlike middle to upper class, white youth, minority or low-income youth have a propensity to feel more estranged from their communities due to lower levels of bridging social capital relationships, which may result in a lower sense of civic efficacy or sense of commitment to the larger community (Bandura, 1997; Kirshner, Strobel, & Fernandez, 2003). Minority groups defined by social class, race, ethnicity or sexual preference, may experience social exclusion, leading to feelings of estrangement or alienation (Bogard & Sherrod, 2008; Hamm, 2001; O'Connor, 1999; Wagmiller, Lennon, Kuang, & Alberti, 2006). Different relationships associated with fundamental associations influenced by cultural practices, combined with feelings of estrangement or alienation affect understandings of responsibility to the larger community, state or citizenship (Bogard & Sherrod, 2008).

According to Banks (2008), many cultural, social and educational policies developed by the state are guided by an assimilationist policy, requiring immigrants to give up first language and cultural practices . Alex and Carol Stepick (2002) demonstrated that immigrants are developing complex self-identities that mix both American culture and the culture of their homeland. Second, generation immigrants are more active in citizenship activities than first generation. However, when immigrant youth are treated as different or perceive a threat to their ethnicity, they react with pride and defense of their cultural integrity (Stepick & Stepick, 2002). The need to defend cultural identity could lead to reclusion and less participation in citizenship activities.

Similarly, El-haj's research of Palestinian America youth demonstrates that young transnational citizens may identify themselves first with their home country (even if they were born in the US) and second with the United States, classifying themselves as 'having' United States citizenship not 'being' a United States citizen (2007).

Minority groups that do not associate themselves with immigrant populations may also have different relationships with the three fundamental associations: family, school and community, than mainstream culture (Bogard & Sherrod, 2008). For example, the mother or maternal figure is understood to be the head of many African American households. In order for a democratic education to fully engage and include all of its citizens, it must recognize the difference in its electorate and strive to address differences through cultural democracy practices. A cultural democracy is one that does not interfere with aspects of minority groups' culture unless it conflicts with the defined ideals of the state (Banks, 2008). The biggest challenge to cultural democracy is education. Education is often based on the understanding of the mainstream. Minorities whose understanding and associations are different from the mainstream may feel marginalized if their backgrounds, histories and understandings are not reflected in their education (Banks, 2008; MacDonald, Shildrick, Webester, & Simpson, 2005; Wong, Eccles, & Sameroff, 2003).

In a study by Gardner (2009) on the citizenship development of black and brown incarcerated youth males discovered that the youth interviewed felt they were a part of a society that expected them to fail. The justice, educational, economic, welfare, media and political systems all appear designed to mediate the impending failure of young men

of color. The young men interviewed had difficulty expressing feelings of civic efficacy for a system they felt targeted them. For these young men, the rights of citizenship came with expanding responsibilities and increasing penalties (Gardner, 2009).

Many youth living in low-income or minority neighborhoods where stratification has occurred between economic classes or ethnic groups, have little opportunity to get involved with institutions, other than schools, that connect youth to their community (Kirshner, et al., 2003; Lincoln & Mamiya, 1990; Sherrod, Flanagan, & Youniss, 2002). The lack of community connection outside of their immediate environments for minority and low income youth has a direct effect on opportunities for adult relationships, education about their communities and chance for involvement (Hart & Atkins, 2002). These occasions provide an important chance for youth to "…look outward, toward the community where they live, and reflect on the justice of economic arrangements or of the political influence they observe." (Flanagan & Faison, 2001, p. 35). As a result, low-income and minority youth may not develop the same sense of civic efficacy as youth with greater opportunities for community connection.

The growing numbers of openly lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender youth make up another special youth population that may feel marginalized in their ability to participate in citizenship. LGBT individuals have been described as partial citizens due to their exclusion from certain rights and responsibilities both within the political as well as social realms of citizenship (Russell, 2002). Societal norms of heterosexuality and homophobia, reinforced through government policies, leave many LGBT youth civically disengaged (Russell, 2002). However, new opportunities are emerging for group

involvement and organizing through online communities and Gay Straight Alliances. These communities provide opportunity for disenfranchised LGBT youth to develop a sense of empowerment, activism and civic engagement (Russell, 2002). Despite obvious obstacles, LGBT youth and their heterosexual supporters have found ways to support one another and become engaged in their communities. Other special youth populations may also be capable of similar engagement practices if given the appropriate tools.

Educating for Citizenship

Democratic nations rely in some capacity on the participation and involvement of citizens. Proper educational and socialization methods must ensure that its citizens obtain the skills necessary to foster democratic citizenship participation. According to Putnam (1995), participation in civic society through associations and community engagement is on the decline. Traditional indications of regional success: voter turnout, newspaper readership, members to clubs and societies are on the decline. Such associations are important networks of "organized reciprocity and civic solidarity"(Putnam, 1995, p. 66). Such networks develop the participants sense of self, expanding it from "I" to "we," enhancing the importance of the collective body (Putnam, 1993).

According to Dewey (1946) learning to be a citizen is to learn to be a member of a community, to share in the responsibility and capacity of directing activity according to the needs and values of the community. Citizenship education then must include the development of a variety of skills or qualities including: prosocial orientation, empowerment, civic efficacy, and critical thinking. Civic education is not simply "a

means to teach the critical and deliberative skills necessary to participate effectively in contentious public debates" but also a development of the desire to participate (Westheimer, 2004, p. 1). A good citizen discovers his participation as a member of a political or community group enriching to other aspects of life (Dewey, 1946). Knowledge is acquired through associations and habits formed under the influenced of customs and institutions of the society (Dewey, 1946). According to Boyte and Fretz (2010) habits are formed by repetition and may predispose certain reactions in unexpected situations.

Dewey's (1946) explanation of citizen education emphasizes the importance of participation in group activities or societies. Other scholars have advocated the importance of group participation in civic development. Youniss, McLellan and Yates (1997) suggest that an individual's developmental background make directly effects his or her inclination to participate in the upkeep and improvement of society. They hypothesize that participation in "norm-bearing groups" during adolescence increases the likelihood of participation as an adult (Youniss, et al., 1997). Similar studies demonstrate the correlation between adolescent involvement in youth groups such as 4-H, student council or religious based groups and adult participation in voluntary organizations. Ladewig and Thomas (1987) found that youth who participated in 4-H were 1.99 times more likely to belong to civic groups and 1.81 times more likely to belong to business groups. Similar studies found a strong correlation between participation in extracurricular activities during high school significantly predicted adult

participation in voluntary and political associations (Hanks & Eckland, 2005; Otto, 1976; Verba, Schlozman, & Brady, 1997).

Youniss, McLellan and Yates (1997) suggest two reasons for the connection between involvement in group activities during youth and participation in civic life as adults. First, participation in groups socializes youth to the basic processes, roles and successes of collective activity (Youniss, et al., 1997). Second, participation in group environments helps youth to incorporate civic participation into their identity during its formation. Group activities integrate civic character and civic efficacy during the development of civic identity. Verba et al. describe involvement in organized groups in high school as "hands-on training for future civic participation"(Verba, et al., 1997, p. 425). Groups that achieve success and have an impact on the members' school, neighborhood or larger community demonstrate to participants: actions within a group or community are mutually dependent, individual and collective actions have the capacity to create change, and differences of opinions can be negotiated (Youniss, et al., 1997).

Involvement in youth groups may be the best opportunity youth have to experience organizational behavior and cooperative effort. Current structures of schools and youth programs limit youth ability to be involved in decision making and governing structures. Beauvais, McKay and Seddon (2001) looked specifically at the structure of the school environment. Traditionally, schools have the single educational experience relied upon to develop good citizens. However, schools are not organized democratically. Policies and issues that directly affect youth's everyday life are not open to youth influence (Beauvais, et al., 2001). The school environment encourages conformity and

obedience (Alazzi, 2009), which can often create students who are ignorant of and disinterested in school politics because of their lack of influence to change them. It may be unreasonable to ask youth to make the jump from a governing body in which they have little influence to one that asks them to think critically of authority, be knowledgeable of current events and actively participate for change. Likewise Westheimer and Kahne (2004a) suggested that schools often promote personal responsibility and individual character as citizenship, obscuring the collective and democratic nature of citizenship. Focusing on personal responsibility effectively avoids the issue of politics and may distract from the analysis of the reasons and causes of social problems (Westheimer & Kahne, 2004a). In order for citizens to make informed decisions about policies and leaders, they must first be capable of thinking critically and dispelling bias when evaluating an issue. However, according to Glaser (1985), the majority of American youth jump to conclusions not supported by evidence or data evaluation. Glaser (1985) suggests that youth educational programs, both inside and outside of the school environment, should be restructured to reflect democratic ideals in order to acclimatize youth to the fundamentals of a democracy from a young age. Youth need a chance to participate in small democratic societies that encourages critical thinking and action about issues that directly relate to their lives before being thrown into the larger national democracy (Alazzi, 2009; Beauvais, et al., 2001; Glaser, 1985; Westheimer & Kahne, 2004a; Youniss, et al., 1997).

Similar restrictive governing structures are found in many youth programs and recreation activities. While certain rules and regulations may be nonnegotiable for safety

and funding reasons, facilitating youth voice and opinion where possible may acclimatize youth to their future role are democratic citizens, increasing their ability to exercise rights and develop critical thinking skills. Youth participation in recreation activities is a form of engagement in the community. Participation in extracurricular activities leads to increased citizenship participation both as a young person and as an adult (Beauvais, et al., 2001). Youth programs that incorporate a civic engagement or community service activities as part of their programming provide positive experiences in active community participation. As youth develop their own sense of individuality, they may also look for a sense of belonging (Hall, et al., 1999). Understanding where one is from is central to identity formation. Youth community projects encourage youth to interact with their community to understand where they come from and appreciate local issues, resulting in a greater commitment to local citizenship rather than national politics (Hall, et al., 1999).Youth who have positive experiences in active community participation are more likely to continue to seek opportunities to engage in citizenship (Tonge & Mycock, 2009). Unfortunately, funding for youth programs and extracurricular activities can be unreliable and unequally distributed, limiting participation, especially in low income areas.

It is important, however, to note what kinds of citizenship youth programs and educational activities promote. For example, Kahne and Westheimer (1996) suggest that service learning programs promote one of two kinds of citizen participation. The first simply promotes a prosocial orientation, emphasizing the importance of altruism. The second, however, combines critical inquiry with action (Kahne & Westheimer, 1996). In

their study on educating for youth citizenship Westheimer and Kahne (2004a) evaluated two service learning projects. The Madison County Youth in Public Service was designed to promote active citizenship in the community, while the second program, The Bayside Students for Justice, advocated community activism. Westheimer and Kahne (2004a) characterized the Madison program as promoting participatory citizenship and the Bayside program justice oriented citizenship. The Madison students worked with local government agencies such as the fire department to collect data, interact with local officials, and determine how to improve service to the public. The Bayside students, on the other hand, researched social issues such as worldwide labor practices and promoted knowledge among their peers. Pre and post evaluations of the participants found that Madison students did not show increased interest in politics or structural issues. However, the program did increase student knowledge of government and civic efficacy (Westheimer & Kahne, 2004a). The Bayside students expressed a need to address problems collectively, demonstrated an increased interest in politics and justice, but did not show increased knowledge or civic efficacy (Westheimer & Kahne, 2004a).

Although Westheimer and Kahne (2004a) suggested that the best form of citizenship education would combine critical thinking and a search for justice, when put into practice the Bayside program that taught justice-oriented citizenship did not provide several important lessons. The students from Bayside did not demonstrate gains in their knowledge of specific community groups or the challenges associated with particular government policies and initiatives. Similarly, the Madison program that sought to teach what Westheimer and Kahne labeled participatory citizenship did not teach students to

evaluate the causes of social problems. Though the Bayside program had the noblest goal, the students who participated may not be able to fully appreciate and use its lessons without increased knowledge and civic efficacy provided by the Madison participatory program. The best activity to teach youth to be good democratic citizens should strive for a balance somewhere in between.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to examine the formation of youth perceptions of citizens during their participation in a civic engagement program. Research suggests that participation in youth group activities is the ideal environment for youth to foster collaborative civic identities (Youniss, et al., 1997). This study attempted to capture youth opinions regarding the roles and responsibilities of citizens. It also sought to examine how the environment of the youth program influenced participants perceptions of justice. The context of youth lives was also considered in an attempt to understand other possible influences on their understandings of citizenship and issues of justice.

Case Study Approach

A case-study approach was chosen to address the research questions. A case study is a methodology that focuses on examining the elements that are present within a single setting to present a naturalistic reporting of a phenomena. The approach focused primarily on qualitative data in order to provide in-depth, rich information (Yin, 2003). Open-ended journal questions were developed using the conceptual framework of citizenship provided by Westheimer and Kahne (2004b). Youth were asked to respond to questions during designated journal writing time during UP-BEAT Youth Health Leadership training. However, quantitative data was used to supplement qualitative findings and to provide detail descriptions of youth participants. More specifically, the *Youth Health Leadership Program Self-Administered Questionnaire* was created to

measure initial perceptions of basic demographic information, pervious group experience and demographic information. According to Yin (2003) the case-study approach is the preferred method when "how" or "why" questions are being posed. Case studies help to orient the chosen phenomenon within the real life context, providing holistic and meaningful characteristics within real-life events and experiences (Yin, 2003). Case studies have been used to examine youth behaviors and interactions in a detailed and meaningful manner (Lombardo, Zakus, & Skinner, 2002; Sherrod, et al., 2002).

Case Study: UP-BEAT Youth Health Leadership (YHL) Program

The UP-BEAT grant program was administered in the community of Bryan/College Station, Texas. Bryan/College Station is located in Brazos County in the Brazos Valley in central Texas. The community is the urban center of the Brazos Valley, providing many of the resources that support the region. The City of Bryan and the City of College Station are two separate political entities but are geographically interspersed to create one urban body. However, the demographics of the two cities are very different.

Setting: Bryan/College Station, Texas

According to the College Station/Bryan Demographic Report, the demographics of College Station/Bryan are greatly influenced by Texas A&M University which enrolled approximately 49,129 students in 2010 (*City of College Station.*, 2002; *Texas A&M University Student Enrollment Summary Student Head Count by Level*, 2010). The 2009 U.S. Census Bureau Profile of Selected Social Characteristics lists the total

population of College Station - Bryan as 200,594 (*American Community Survey*, 2009). Eighty-one percent of residents have a high school diploma or higher (*American Community Survey*, 2009).

In College Station, approximately 80.5% of the population categorized themselves as white, with 5.4% African American and 10 % Hispanic (*American Community Survey*, 2000). Households that speak English make up 82.7% of the total population, while 7.9% speak Spanish in the home (*American Community Survey*, 2000). Ninety-four percent of the population have a high school diploma or higher (*American Community Survey*, 2000). Clearly influenced by the large student population, 40.2% households' yearly income was under $15,000 (*American Community Survey*, 2000).

According to the 2000 U.S. Census Bureau Profile of General Demographic Characteristics, in Bryan approximately 64.7% of the population is white, 17.7% African American and 27.8% Hispanic (*American Community Survey*, 2000). While 74.5% of the population speaks English in the home, 22.3% speak Spanish as the primary language in the home (*American Community Survey*, 2000). Seventy-two percent of adults living in Bryan have a high school graduate diploma or higher. Although the median household income is listed as $31,672, 23% of the population's household income is under $15,000 a year (*American Community Survey*, 2000).

Youth Health Leadership Program

Background

The Texas Department of State Health Services awarded the Brazos Valley Community Action Agency (BVCAA) $150,000 for the community based obesity

prevention program to be run in connection with the Brazos Valley Obesity Prevention Network (BVOPN) in Bryan/College Station. Bryan/College Station is one of eleven communities around the state of Texas selected to implement programs based on CDC-recommended strategies for healthy eating, active living and obesity prevention.

Umbrella Partnerships – BE Active In Our Town (UP-BEAT) was organized by the BVCAA in partnership with the Brazos Valley Obesity Prevention Network (BVOPN) to develop partnership efforts to increase access to physical activity for families with limited resources in Bryan/College Station. A number of community groups had previously begun efforts to provide access to safe physical activities. However, inadequate collaboration has limited the success of these efforts. The UP-BEAT project chose two underserved areas of the community in which to focus efforts, the neighborhood surrounding the Lincoln Recreation Center in College Station and the neighborhood surrounding the Neal Recreation Center in Bryan. The areas were chosen due to high rates of poverty and obesity. The percentage of obese individuals in Brazos County is 75% higher than the State of Texas. The percentage of morbidly obese individuals is 73% higher (Ribardo et al., 2011). UP-BEAT hopes to enact change in the specified neighborhoods through policy modifications by developing community work groups and establishing the Youth Health Leadership Program.

Mission

The mission of the UP-BEAT Youth Health Leadership Program is to prioritize necessary changes to the targeted communities surrounding the Neal and Lincoln Recreation Centers in order to increase access to physical activity. The UP-BEAT

Youth Health Leadership program was designed for the youth participants to reflect the greater population of Bryan/College Station.

Recruitment

Efforts were made to advertise and make the Youth Health Leadership program available to a wide range of demographics throughout Bryan/College Station. The opportunity to participate in UP-BEAT Youth Health Leadership program was advertised on the local radio and television stations. Flyers (see Appendix A) were handed out to all 6th, 7th, 8th and 9th graders in the area schools. Program facilitators also set up an information booth at the local First Friday events located in downtown Bryan, TX and handed out brochures advertising the program (see Appendix B).

Logistics

Trainings were held at the Brazos Valley Council of Governments Office Building as well as in the targeted communities. The Brazos Valley Council of Governments facility is a central location to residents in both cities and offers the necessary classroom and computer lab space. In addition, the building was selected due to its security given that the trainings were being held in the evenings. Transportation to and from training and assessment events was available. Training sessions were held Thursday evenings from 6-8pm from October 2010 to May 2011. A training and special event calendar was provided to each participant and parent/guardian at the orientation session (see Appendix C). Youth participating in UP-BEAT Youth Health Leadership program were compensated for their time and effort with t-shirts, food and gift cards. The grant from the Texas Department of Health Services included funds to provide

compensation for youth. Youth did not receive additional compensation for participation in this research study.

Curriculum

Curriculums for the program were primarily researched and developed by the Texas A&M Youth Development Initiative, program director, Dr. Corliss Outley, and graduate research assistants in the Department of Recreation, Park and Tourism Science Youth Development program at Texas A&M University. UP-BEAT youth participants were trained in four curriculum areas: *public speaking, leadership, technology and youth mapping* and *government*.

- **Public Speaking**: In an effort to communicate clearly and present themselves in a professional manner, UP-BEAT youth completed several activities to improve their public speaking skills. The purpose of the public speaking curriculum was to: 1) introduce the importance of public speaking, 2) develop skills to combat nervousness, 3) practice interviewing techniques, and 4) perform in a variety of public speaking situations. Youth were taught techniques to help manage nervousness, provided tips on body language and voice manipulation, and played interactive activities to assist in recognizing bad public speaking habits. Youth also prepared for interaction with community members by preparing elevator speeches to introduce themselves as well as the UP-BEAT program to the public. The elevator speeches were two minutes in length and were designed individually or in pairs to be interesting and informative. They also practiced conducting interviews with community members. For this training youth designed a community interview guide.

Questions were developed to ascertain residents present, past, or future behaviors, feelings, and/or factual information, Sample questions included: *How often do you participate in physical activity?* and *Are there any problems in your neighborhood?* Each youth was able to interview approximately three community members individually or in teams (2-3 youth). Youth participants were also able to practice their public speaking skills during opportunities to present the program to KBTX, the local television station, as well as conduct a workshop on the program at the 2011 Sequor YDI Conference in Austin, Texas. At the conclusion of the program youth presented recommendations and data findings to both Bryan and College Station city councils as well as other city departments in the Spring of 2011 (see Appendix C).

- **Leadership:** To provide individual empowerment and youth voice, the leadership curriculum was designed to allow the youth to explore how leadership is defined, identify leadership priorities and develop a personal vision statement. Leadership activities included interactive session on defining leadership and encouraging their engagement by making sure each student had the opportunity to serve in a leadership capacity in different aspects of the program.
- **Technology and Mapping:** Technology and Mapping curriculum was designed to assist youth in developing their skills on different technology uses, creation of community maps, utilizing walkability assessments, produce products for final project. Elevator speeches and mock interviews were video tapped and reviewed by UP-BEAT youth as well. Videos allowed youth to assess possible improvements to their public speaking skills. In an effort to complete the best possible assessment of

the targeted communities, several opportunities were provided for youth to interact physical neighborhood and its residents. Youth took bus tours of the targeted communities and discussed the history and other influences on the neighborhoods. Participants in the UP-BEAT YHL program generated discussion about what makes a good community and the role of health within a community. During February 2011, walkability assessment were conducted in each of the targeted neighborhoods. During the community events, UP-BEAT youth participants walked the neighborhood streets and completed a walkability assessment developed by Dr. Chanam Lee of Texas A&M University's Department of Landscape Architecture and Urban Planning. Dr. Lee provided a 1.5 hours training to youth participants on how to complete the walkability assessment. The walkability assessment was designed to assess the neighborhoods ability to allow participants to walk and other factors that influence low levels of physical activity. While completing the assessment, youth also interacted with community members to determine personal views of the neighborhood.

After all assessments were completed, youth used youth mapping technology through the online database *Community Walk* (see communitywalks.com) to organize collected data and form recommendations for community improvements. Youth created PowerPoint presentations and skits to communicate collected information and corresponding recommendations to convey to the public.

- **Government:** A curriculum on government was not previously developed for the youth training. After the governmental panel, it was decided that a training on

advocacy, government structure, policy making process, and health disparities was warranted. Youth learned about the structure of city government, interacting with representatives from the City of Bryan and the City of College Station through a panel discussion with city officials. UP-BEAT YHL program worked with Texas Health Institute to provide youth with training in policy development and advocacy. The Texas Health Institute sponsored a special training session for UP-BEAT youth participants with the Youth Empowered Solutions (YES!) organization from North Carolina (see http://www.youthempoweredsolutions.org/). The YES! organization works to empower youth in partnership with adults to create community change. YES! speakers discussed community structures and advocacy.

Adult Leaders Overview

The researcher acted as Project Coordinator for the UP-BEAT Youth Health Leadership program. She took primary responsibility for organizing and running the training sessions, environmental assessments and presentations to community leaders, and assisted by Project Director Dr. Corliss Outley in writing curriculum and fulfilling grant evaluation requirements.

Other adult leaders included volunteers from the BVCAA and the BVOPN as well as graduate and undergraduate students from the Texas A&M University. The expertise areas of the adult leaders included: public health, health education, community extension and youth development.

Participant Overview

The UP-BEAT Youth Health Leadership program had twenty-five consistent youth participants during the first semester. However, participation declined during the second semester to nineteen consistent participants. Attempts were made to contact youth who decided not to continue participating in the program through phone calls and emails. Although not all youth responded, reasons for discontinuing participation included: family moved to a different city, increase in school work, extra-curricular and sports programs scheduled at the same time.

Demographic Information

Nineteen of the original 26 participants completed the UP-BEAT program. Youth who chose not to continue the program generally did so because of scheduling conflicts with other extracurricular activities. Of the 26 original participants there were 5 boys and 20 girls. The participant break down by race was 4% Asian, 35 % Black, 7% Hispanic and 50% White. Two youth chose to categorize their race as "other." Fifteen percent of youth indicated that a language other than English was spoken in the home. Ages of participants ranged from 11 to 16 years. Sixty-one percent of youth were 11 or 12 years old. The participants represented a range of socio-economic backgrounds. At least ten participants were enrolled in the Free or Reduced Lunch Program. Two participants declined to indicate if they received Free or Reduced Lunch. Nineteen youth indicated that they lived in households with two adults. Eleven youth participants are residents of Bryan, while fifteen live in College Station. Most youth indicated they had lived in Bryan or College Station for at least five years (twenty participants).

Experience of Group Work

Overall, youth participants had had a wide range of previous experiences in youth groups or organizations in the past 12 months. Only 2 of the original 26 youth had never participated in a youth organization or group before. Those youth who had participated in group activities were asked to indicate which type of activities they had participated in. Categories youth could choose from ranged from spots team to academics clubs to 4-H. Sixty-one percent of youth had participated in sports teams. Other categories that a large portion of participants had been involved in included: school spirit clubs (46%), faith-based organizations (46%) and band/ orchestra groups 42%.

Descriptions of Youth Participants

This section includes short descriptions of the 19 youth who remained in the program until its completion based on the researcher's constructions and observations of the youth participants. Pseudonyms are used to protect youth identities.

Brandy

Brandy attends UP-BEAT YHL Program regularly. She is black and in the sixth grade, although she looks much older. She is a very attractive young lady and is often quiet during the program. She is often flirtatious with the boys in the program. However, Brandy is generally more mature than other sixth graders in the program. She has lots of self-confidence and often acts as a leader by example.

Lauren

Lauren also comes to the program regularly. She is in the seventh grade. She is white and from a middle class family. Her parents are divorced and her father does not live in

the area. Lauren is athletic and involved in sport activities such as softball. At the beginning of the program, she was very outgoing and enthusiastic to the point of occasionally disruption. As the program progressed she became more subdued and involved in other activities. She seemed to grow impatient with the program and frustrated when it interfered with her other activity plans.

Kara

Kara has a twin brother, Dan, who is also in the program. Both are white and in the sixth grade. Their parents are highly educated professionals with terminal degrees. Upon entering the program, Kara was incredibly shy and interacted only with her brother. However, after a couple of months she began making other friends in the program and separated from her brother. Kara is remarkably intelligent and loves to read. She is highly involved in other activities such as soccer and Taekwondo. Due to commitments to other activities, Kara and Dan are unable to attend UP-BEAT YHL every week.

Dan

Dan is Kara's twin brother. He is also remarkably intelligent and insightful. Dan reads books far above his grade level and excels in the gifted program in school. He is also highly involved in other activities such as Boy Scouts and Taekwondo. However, Dan sometimes struggles with social interactions. His body language and demeanor easily communicates his feelings and often suggests that he finds others to be unintelligent. Both Dan and his sister attended the program frequently despite their many other commitments.

Jessica

Jessica is exceedingly athletic. She is good at and plays seemingly every sport offered in her school or community. She has high expectations for herself. She is black and in the seventh grade. Her family is low income. Jessica is outgoing and lots of fun to be around. Due to her high involvement in other sport activities, Jessica only attended the program occasionally.

Mariella

Mariella is in the seventh grade and has a Hispanic heritage. She is very independent and strong willed, although she can occasionally be unexpectedly self-conscious. Mariella has had problems in some of her relationships with adults in the past that she is still working through. This has led her to be very careful of whom she trusts. She is very dedicated to the UP-BEAT YHL program.

Anna

Anna is also in the seventh grade. She and Mariella are good friends and joined the program together. Anna is more reserved but also has a quirky fun side. She has consistently attended all program activities.

Sammie

Sammie is from a black, low-income family. Although she can sometimes have an attitude, closer examination reveals the attitude is a defense mechanism. She is highly involved in other activities and a very good student. She does not attend UP-BEAT YHL frequently, but she is usually very engaged in the program when she does attend.

Laura

Laura is in the sixth grade. She is from a low-income, white family. Members of her family have or have had serious health problems, and Laura is still working through some of consequences of those issues. She attends UP-BEAT YHL regularly. She is often very silly and immature for her age, but when properly directed she makes impressive observations and contributions to the program.

Harrison

Harrison is Asian. He is in the sixth grade. However, he is very advanced for his grade. He is very involved in other sports and activities. His family has very high expectations for his accomplishments. Harrison attends the program regularly and is very involved in each session.

Bill

Bill is in the sixth grade. He is white, middle class. He attended UP-BEAT YHL Program regularly. Bill is often loud and rambunctious. He seems to have endless energy and little patience for any activity that required him to sit still. Bill can often be blunt to the point of rude. He has close relationships with members of his extended family. Bill occasionally acted out during the program session, but these instances were usually prompted by problems occurring at home.

Max

Max is in the sixth grade. He is black and from a low income family. When he entered the program Max was painfully shy. He stared stubbornly at the table in front of him and only looked up when he thought no one was paying attention. Slowly during his

participation in the UP-BEAT YHL Program, Max made a dramatic change. He began making friends and interacting with adults until he became a real leader in the program. During the program Max's family experienced domestic and financial struggles. Max experienced a great deal of stress during these periods and his self-confidence often suffered resulting in fast and sometimes dramatic changes in his mood.

Gillian

Gillian is in the seventh grade. She is from a white middle class family. Gillian is very artistic and incorporates this creativity into her sense of style. She is quite shy among peers and seems to feel more comfortable interacting with adults. Aside from a few commitments to extra-curricular activities, Gillian is very dedicated to the UP-BEAT YHL program.

Jordan

Jordan is very well mannered and respectful. He is also extremely well spoken. He is in the seventh grade. He is from a black, middle class family. He is involved in many other activities and not always able to come to UP-BEAT YHL trainings.

Erica

Erica is in the sixth grade. She is white. She has several brothers and as a result is a bit of a tomboy. Erica interacts well with other youth but prefers adult attention. Erica attends the program regularly.

Haley

Haley is white and in the sixth grade. She comes from a low income family. Her mother is very involved in her life and the two have a very close relationship. When the program

started Haley's mother attended events with her, and Haley was hesitant to interact with other youth. However, after an event in which the other youth expressed their confidence in Haley's abilities, she became quite outgoing. By the end of the program, Haley was so confident that she was occasionally disruptive to program activities. She often interrupts activities to get the attention of her peers by being silly.

Kelly

Kelly is in the ninth grade. She is black and always pays careful attention to ensure that she looks nice. She is involved in other extra-curricular activities at school. Kelly is extremely mature and self-aware. She carefully considers her options for the future and often engages adult workers in conversations about what decisions they made about college, jobs and relationships. Younger youth in the UP-BEAT YHL program regard Kelly as a role model. While Kelly is not a vocal leader within the program, she leads by example.

Mary

Mary is older than the targeted 6-9th grade demographic for the program. The program was recommended to her by her counselor. The counselor made sure that Mary got to training sessions and signed up to attend extra activities. Mary was often a powerful leader in the group. However, she sometimes had problems developing relationships with youth in the program.

Data Collection Procedures

Measurements used for this study were designed to capture youth perceptions of citizenship upon entering the program and to observe those perceptions as they

developed and changed throughout the UP-BEAT Youth Health Leadership program. A wide range of measurements were used in an effort to connect with the different personalities and learning abilities of youth participants.

YHL Program Self-Administered Questionnaire

The UP-BEAT grant proposal included a mandatory evaluation of all activities designated in the work plan. The *Youth Health Leadership Self-Administered Survey* (see Appendix D) was developed and administered by the external evaluators, Texas A&M Health Science Center, School of Rural Public Health, with input from the Texas A&M Youth Development Initiative, the BVCAA and the program team. The survey was designed to be administered at the beginning, mid and end of the UP-BEAT Youth Health Leadership program. Many of the measures used in the survey were adapted from previous studies used in youth led tobacco prevention programs (Jakes & Shannon, 2002). Chosen measures addressed the UP-BEAT Youth Health Leadership program objectives and the development of related life skills among participants. Targeted objectives of the UP-BEAT Youth Health Leadership program included increased: civic engagement, civic efficacy, knowledge of health inequalities, knowledge of city government and power structures. The survey was also designed to measure the effectiveness of the four curriculum areas: public speaking, leadership, technology and youth mapping. Individual items from the chosen surveys were scrambled in random order to make one large measurement. Surveys were administered and analyzed by the School of Rural Public Health to avoid any bias and to promote honest responses from participants.

The *Youth Health Leadership Self-Administered Survey* was composed of five sections: *Community Issues, Your Involvement, Your Skills, Use of Digital Technology,* and *A Little About You.* This survey is composed of multiple choice questions using Likert scales and open-ended questions. It was estimated that the survey would take participants approximately fifteen minutes to complete. However, the survey took closer to thirty minutes for the youth to complete due to the unexpected low reading levels of the participants.

Each time the survey was given youth were instructed to take as much time as they needed. Youth were reminded that there was no right or wrong answer and that their answers were confidential. Evaluators remain in the room to answer any questions. During the first administration of the survey the section entitled *Your Involvement* was completed as a group in an effort to combat vocabulary difficulties. However, youth indicated his or her individual answer on his or her individual *Youth Health Leadership Program Self-Administered Questionnaire*. During subsequent administrations of the survey, youth were able to complete the section individually. Each time after the survey was completed youth were asked to write their initials and date of birth on the front cover of the survey so that individual progress could be recorded.

The purpose of this study was to examine the formation of citizenship during youth participation in a program or organization such as UP-BEAT. Therefore, this study examined the data from the following sections of the Youth Health Leadership Self-Administered Questionnaire: *Demographic Information, Experience of Group Work,* and *What Kind of Citizen* surveys.

Demographic Information

The Demographic Information measure (see Appendix E) was designed to gather relevant demographics of the surveyed population. Demographic information is defined as social characteristics of the population such as race, gender, grade level and age. Example questions included: *How old are you? What is your race/ethnicity? Do you participate in a free or reduced lunch program?*

Experience of Group Work

The Experience of Group Work measurement (see Appendix F) addressed how many groups and organizations the youth has been involved in over the previous twelve months. Group work refers to any youth participating in a community or private organization for a specific purpose or goal. The survey lists seventeen possible types of organizations youth might participate in such as *Academic Club or Society, Sports Teams,* and *Boys & Girls Club.* Youth are asked to indicate which groups they participate in by circling the corresponding category.

What Kind of Citizen

The *What Kind of Citizen* measure (see Appendix G) was developed by Joel Westheimer of the University of Ottawa and Joseph Kahne of Mills College in 2004. The survey measures understandings of citizenship by addressing three factors identified and defined by Westheimer and Kahne: *Personally Responsible Citizenship*, *Participatory Citizenship* and *Justice Oriented Citizenship*. Each category of citizenship builds upon the previous level. Justice Oriented Citizenship is the highest level. All items are rated on a scale of 1 (Strongly Agree) to 5 (Strongly Disagree).

Personally Responsible Citizenship includes obeying laws, paying bills, volunteering, moral character and a belief in honesty and integrity. The *Personally Responsible Citizenship* factor includes seven items. Example items include: *I think people should assist those in their lives who are most in need of help* and *I think it's important for people to follow the rules and laws.* The *Personally Responsible Citizenship* factor has a reliability rating of .82 (Westheimer & Kahne, 2004a).

Participatory Citizenship is defined as citizens who are active members of their communities, understand how government works, organize efforts to improve the community, and have a shared community identity and understanding of place. The Participatory Citizenship factor includes four items with a reliability rating of .83. Items include: *Being concerned with national, state, and local issues is an important responsibility for everyone.* and *Everyone should be involved in working with community organization and local government on issues that affect the community* (Westheimer & Kahne, 2004a).

Justice Oriented Citizenship includes: critically assessing authority, seeking out causes of injustice, promoting social change and seeking higher moral purpose. *I think it's important to challenge inequalities in society* and *When thinking about problems in society, it is important to focus on underlying causes,* are example items in the *Justice Oriented Citizenship* factor. The Justice Oriented Citizenship factor has six items and a reliability rating of .81 (Westheimer & Kahne, 2004a).

Youth Journal Assignment Writing

In order to investigate how youth participants think and feel about elements of citizenship, it was necessary to include a qualitative measurement. Although several forms of qualitative research were considered (focus groups, interviews, discussion boards), journals were determined to be the most appropriate method for the program environment and the age group. Journals acted as a kind of self-administered questionnaire, providing a form of a structured interview. The use of journals allow the participant to feel a sense of anonymity, as he or she is less likely to feel pressured to impress the interviewer or peers (Bernard, 2000). Also, journals allow youth opinions to be obtained within the structure of the UP-BEAT training sessions.

Youth participants were asked to respond to journal questions during the last ten to twenty minutes of each training session during the Youth Health Leadership trainings. Each youth were assigned a number to identify his or her journal. Youth were provided with pens and journals. Journals were collected at the end of each journal writing session to ensure that entries are made only by participants. The use of journals as a data collection method provided youth with a sense of anonymity in their answers, which helped to balance social pressures to provide a particular kind of answer. The use of journals also helps to eliminate bias by the researcher who facilitated the youth training and environmental assessment sessions (Denzin & Lincoln, 2003). The researcher was very familiar with youth personalities, but less familiar with youth writing abilities.

A quiet space for writing was provided, although youth generally talked among themselves during journal writing sessions. Additional time to answer questions was

provided if requested by youth. One question was given to the youth for each journal writing session. However, if a participant missed a journal writing session, he or she was asked to answer the missed question during the next journal writing session.

If youth responded to journal questions with only a few words, he or she was asked to write at least three or four sentences. Youth were also instructed to include any other thoughts or reflections not directly addressed by the given question.

Journal Response Questions

Journal questions were designed to address Westheimer and Kahne's (2004) three levels of citizenship: *personally responsible citizen (PR), participatory citizen (P)* and *justice-oriented citizen (JO)* (Table 1). For example, *How is being a responsible person (paying bills on time, obeying laws, being honest) related to being a good citizen? Is it related at all?* addressed the *Personally Responsible Citizen.* The question, *Sometimes laws are not easy to follow. Is there ever a time when disobeying a law might be the best option? When? Is it okay to break a law if you have to?* asked about *Participatory Citizenship* and *Justice- Oriented Citizenship*.

Table 1: Journal Questions

Journal Question	**Date Administered**	**Levels of Citizenship**		
		Personally Responsible	Participatory	Justice-Oriented
What kinds of activities do responsible/good citizens do?	11.11.10	X	X	X
What is the most important characteristic of a good citizen? Why?	11.18.10	X	X	X
Sometimes laws are not easy to follow. Is there ever a time when disobeying a law might be the best option? When? Is it okay to break a law if you have to?	12.02.10	X		X
Lawyers, teachers and doctors are all required to further their education in order to graduate with a degree that enables them to do the best at their profession. Should citizens be required to study and earn a degree so they know how to be the best possible citizens? Why or why not? Is it important for citizens to have some kind of education?	12.09.10	X	X	
How should decisions be made in the community? How should youth be included in those decisions?	01.13.11		X	X
What is the most important experience youth can have to prepare them to be good citizens? Why?	01.27.11	X	X	X
Do you think you have a responsibility to be a good citizen? What do you do to improve your community? What activities will you do in the future as a citizen?	02.03.11	X	X	X

Table 1: Continued

Journal Question	**Date Administered**	**Levels of Citizenship**		
		Personally Responsible	Participatory	Justice-Oriented
How is being a responsible person (paying bills on time, obeying laws, being honest) related to being a good citizen? Is it related at all?	02.10.11	X		
Who is responsible for making the USA a good place to live? Who is responsible for making your community a good place to live?	02.24.11		X	X

YHL Participant Applications

In order to assess interest in the UP-BEAT Youth Health Leadership program and to choose participants, youth interested in participating were asked to fill out an application. Applications included basic demographic and contact information as well as an essay question: *Why do you want to participate in UP-BEAT?* The majority of youth participating in the program answered the application question prior to participation in the program, although some students who joined after the initial program orientation did not. Youth responses to the application question were coded to determine youth motivation for participation in a youth health advocacy program.

Youth Interviews

Youth interviews were originally designed to gather evaluation material for the Umbrella-Partnerships-BE Active in our Town. Questions were meant to capture what youth learned from the UP-BEAT Youth Health Leadership Program and how the program may influence participants in the future.

Interviews of UP-BEAT youth were performed by two interns. At the time of the interviews the interns had been involved in the UP-BEAT program for two months, so youth participants were familiar and comfortable with them. The interviews were performed during UP-BEAT training sessions at the Brazos Valley Council of Governments Building using flip-cameras. Interviews were performed in the hallway outside the training room. UP-BEAT youth and adult leaders were the only ones in the building at the time. Each interview took about five minutes. Interns were given interview questions and asked to prompt youth when necessary.

Interview questions included:

1. Tell me about your experience in UP-BEAT.
2. What have you learned from participating in this program-i.e. skills?
3. What do you hope to take from UP-BEAT upon program completion?
4. Why is it important for youth to get involved in their communities? Is it important?
5. Do you feel youth can make a difference in their communities? How?
6. If an adult, such as a teacher or coach, told you to do something you knew was wrong, would you do it? Should citizens question their leaders?

Researcher's Field Notes

The research kept field notes detailing events, interactions and general feelings during the project and data collection process. Field notes also included the researcher's answers to journal questions and general perceptions of citizenship and youth citizenship to reveal any biases about the research topic (Creswell, 2007). To identify any unacknowledged bias the researcher also took field notes after every youth training session. Four types of notes will be included in this study: cryptic jotting, detailed descriptions, analytic notes, and subjective reflections (Berg, 2009). Detailed

descriptions will address how youth behave, how they look and whether or not they seem engaged in journal writing as well as general observations. Analytical notes will include any issues or thoughts that come to mind during the training sessions. Self reflection notes will include personal observations or feelings that may occur during the youth training sessions (Berg, 2009). Field notes allowed the researcher to reflect on what she was thinking and feeling during training sessions with youth. The recorded thoughts revealed possible bias of the researcher as well as issues of validity, reliability and other possible limitations. The field note also acted as a record of what events took place and how to improve activities and trainings completed with the youth. Field notes were typed and given to colleagues and peers for review to prevent the researcher's bias from skewing the general findings.

Researcher's Role

The researcher of this study played an integral role in the development, organization and facilitation of UP BEAT's Youth Health Leadership program. The researcher assisted in writing the curriculum for the program. She recruited youth participants and registered participant information. During each training, she was predominately responsible for the facilitation of activities and events the youth participated in. She assisted in the collection of both the qualitative and quantitative data. In this way, the researcher was closely connected with the youth population used for this study. While the close connection may have produced biases, it also allowed the researcher opportunity to make close observations about the development of youth participants. In addition, frustrations and observations the researcher had about the

behaviors and attitudes of youth participants were recorded and acknowledged in detailed field notes as well as weekly meetings with advisors and the Program Management Team.

In addition, the researcher is also very interested in citizenship and citizenship education in youth. She has read extensively on the subject and inevitable has developed her own definition of good citizenship. Similarly, the researcher has a background in American political philosophy. Her opinions may be skewed in support of historic fundamental American democratic ideals in accordance with the mantra she was taught in her undergraduate studies.

Data Management

The secondary data used in this study was collected by and remains the property of the Brazos Valley Community Action Agency. The Brazos Valley Community Action Agency collected the data for use in evaluating the Youth Health Leadership program. Youth participants and their parents were required to sign consent forms acknowledging and agreeing to the collection of this data and ensuring confidentiality. The master data was kept by BVCAA in their office, all identifiable indications have been removed and only numerical data was provided to the researcher. No individuals were cited by name. Pseudonyms were used in the results chapters of this study to increase readability. Consent has been gained from the Brazos Valley Community Action Agency for the use of this information as secondary data for the purpose of this study. The Texas A&M Health Science Center School of Rural Public Health was hired by the Brazos Valley Community Action Agency to act as an external evaluator. The School of Rural Public

Health was responsible for collecting and managing the quantitative data. The researcher, acting as the UP-BEAT project coordinator, was responsible for collecting and managing the qualitative data from the journal questions, since this was part of the program curriculum. She was assisted by two student interns.

Data Analysis

Quantitative Data

The Youth Health Leadership Program Self-Administered Questionnaire was included in this study as a descriptor of the youth participants' demographics, experiences and perceptions of citizenship. Basic descriptive analyses of questionnaire results were run with the assistance of the School of Rural Public Health, the external evaluator. Questionnaire results will be used to assess the baseline of youth perceptions of citizenship.

Qualitative Data

Youth Journal Assignment Writing, Youth Health Leadership Participant Applications and Youth Interviews were transcribed by the researcher and two interns for the UP-BEAT Youth Health Leadership program. Each transcription was checked for mistakes by a new transcriptionist and disagreements were resolved by the researcher.

The responses were analyzed using cognitive mapping. Cognitive mapping demonstrates the cognitive models of the respondents while allowing for the intuition of human coding and quantitative methods of network analysis (Denzin & Lincoln, 2003). Using the Westheimer and Kahne framework, cognitive mapping revealed how youth

think about citizenship by mapping the associations and ordering of ideas within their responses. Cognitive mapping can also analyze a variety of text lengths (Denzin & Lincoln, 2003) which will allow for varying response lengths.

Each response was coded by two different coders. Coders were instructed to separate responses into units based on new or different ideas expressed by the youth respondent. Westheimer and Kahne's (2004b) characteristics *personally responsible citizen, participatory citizen* and *justice-oriented citizen* served as a guiding framework, but coders were instructed to consider ideas not addressed in the framework (Table 2). After coding was completed by two separate coders, the research team met to discuss differences in the units created by the two coders. After units were agreed upon, the researcher organized units using mental mapping in an effort to best categorize answers into Personally Responsible Citizenship, Participatory Citizenship, Justice Oriented Citizenship or unrelated categories defined by youth participants (Denzin & Lincoln, 2003). Similar activities were placed closer together, and dissimilar activities were placed farther apart. The cognitive map provided the researcher with a visual display of the similarities and differences in the data (Denzin & Lincoln, 2003).

Table 2: What Kind of Citizen

Responsibility		**Work for Justice**
Personally Responsible	**Participatory**	**Justice Oriented**
Obey laws Pay bills Volunteer High Moral Character Believe in honest/ integrity	Active member of community Understanding of government Arranges efforts for community improvement Shared identity/ ideals Shared understanding of place Motivated to change community	Critically assesses authority Seeks out causes of injustice Promotes social change Higher moral purpose

The researcher engaged knowledgeable youth development colleagues and advisors in coding of the data to perform a parallel analysis. Triangulation was also used to address the consistency of the findings. Denzin (1978) identified four basic types of triangulation that researchers rely on: data triangulation, investigator triangulation, theory triangulation, and methodological triangulation. In this case, data source triangulation was used as the researcher examined the citizenship measures from the survey, youth interviews and the journal entries on citizenship.

Researcher's Field Notes

Field notes allowed the researcher an opportunity for self-reflection. Field notes helped to reveal reflexivity, or the extent to which the research was biased by the research's personal thoughts and opinions. They also helped the researcher to track the development of the youth participants throughout participation in the UP-BEAT Youth

Health Leadership Program. Field notes were typed and distributed to peers and advisors to identify any bias that may skew the overall results of the study.

Missing Data

As in any youth program, attendance and participation was not consistent. Unavoidably, youth missed sessions in which Youth Health Leadership Assignment journal writing or the Youth Health Leadership Program Self-Administered Questionnaire were administered. Youth were asked to make up these assessments at the next training session they attended. Similarly, youth membership in the group decreased throughout the program. Efforts were made to contact each youth who decided not to continue participating in the program to discuss his or her reason for quitting. However, not all youth were able to be contacted. Several youth had moved from the area and contact information originally given to program leaders was no longer valid. Data collected from youth journals and questionnaires that chose not to continue in the program were used in the data analysis.

Trustworthiness

Throughout the duration of this study, the researcher implemented multiple techniques to ensure the trustworthiness of the findings, including triangulation, prolonged engagement, peer review and debriefings, and researcher role (Creswell, 2007).

First, triangulation of researchers and methods was employed in order to balance out any of the potential weaknesses in each of the data collection methods (Gray, 2004). The study relied on investigator triangulation as multiple researchers assisted in the

collection of data as well as its analysis. Additionally, methods triangulation was utilized The use of both the *What Kind of Citizen* survey by Westheimer and Kahne (2004) and the qualitative journal questions addressing the qualities of citizenship addressed in the *What Kind of Citizen* survey assisted in triangulating results (Creswell, 2007). Triangulation was used to neutralize any bias that may originate from particular data sources, methods, and the researcher by employing other data or theory (Creswell, 2007) Triangulation ensured the integrity of the inferences drawn by using multiple data sources. By utilizing multiple points of reference, a researchers interpretations can be used to elaborate or corroborate findings and can greatly strengthen the study.

Secondly, qualitative researchers suggest using prolonged engagement and persistent observation as a means of developing trust with participants and cultivating a rapport that promotes a valid representation of contextual actions and perceptions (Glesne & Peshkin, 1992; Merriam, 1988).The researcher attended as many UP-BEAT Youth Health Leadership trainings and events as possible, interacting with participants and their parents, to build trust and learn about the youth culture (Creswell, 2007).

Delimitations and Limitations

This case study confined itself to examining aspects of one specific youth development program based on an obesity prevention grant from the Texas Department of Health. This study was not designed to make generalizations. Rather the study took an in depth look at the development of youth civic identity and feelings toward citizenship using both qualitative and quantitative methods. The small sample size and lack of a control group makes it impossible for the researcher to generalize the findings related to

the quantitative research questions. The quantitative methods used were designed to act as a general indicator or description of the youths' experiences, demographics and understandings of citizenship and civic engagement. The quantitative measures were not meant to be able to generalize findings to the general youth population. Similarly, the findings related to the qualitative research question could be open to other interpretations.

The researcher performing this secondary analysis acted as the project coordinator in this grant. She interacted closely with youth participants on a weekly basis and consequently, may bring certain biases to this study based on her close relationships with the youth. However, every effort has been made to counter these biases. The School of Rural Public Health collected, managed and coded the quantitative data. The qualitative data was coded and analyzed with the help of peers and advisors.

CHAPTER IV

FINDINGS

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to examine the formation of civic identities and ideals of citizenship of youth participating in a "norm-bearing" (Youniss, et al., 1997, p.621) civic engagement program. According to Youniss et al. (1997) the formation of civic ideologies are most likely to occur during participation in youth groups. UP-BEAT Youth Health Leadership program was chosen as a "norm-bearing" youth group (Youniss, et al., 1997, p.621). The research questions were:

1. *How do youth participating in UP-BEAT's Youth Health Leadership program, understand the roles and responsibility of citizenship within their community?*

2. *How is youth participants perception and understanding of justice influenced by the environment of the UP-BEAT Youth Health Leadership program?*

The study findings will first present the quantitative results from Westheimer and Kahne (2004) *What Kind of Citizen?* survey as a baseline descriptor of youth understandings of citizenship. The qualitative data will then be presented based on the research questions. Sections include: *What Kind of Citizen? Survey*, *Research Question 1: Roles and Responsibilities of Citizenship* and *Research Question 2: Influence of Program on Perceptions of Justice.*

Errors in grammar or spelling reflect youth journal responses and were maintained to ensure dependability of data. The errors in spelling and grammar are an important reflection of youth in the UP-BEAT YHL program.

Baseline Understanding of Citizenship

During the initial training session, a baseline survey was provided to all participants. This survey was designed by Westheimer and Kane (2004) and provided a description of the participants perceptions of what kind of citizen each youth envisioned. Youth perceptions of citizenship largely reflected the predicted pattern of Westheimer and Kahne (2004). According to the survey, most youth highly identified with items corresponding to the *personally responsible citizen.* Responses to items relating to the *participatory citizen* suggested that while most youth identified the characteristics of the *participatory citizen*, youth were less certain these items. Youth were least certain or unsure about items relating to the *justice-oriented citizen.* The *What Kind of Citizen?* survey closely corresponded to the qualitative results of the study.

Personally Responsible Citizen

According to Westheimer and Kahne (2004b), the *personally responsible citizen* has high moral character. He or she works hard and believes in honesty and integrity. The personally responsible citizen pays bills on time, obeys the law and volunteers to help others. He or she is responsible for personal property.

Youth significantly identified with the *personally responsible citizen*. Of six out of seven items addressing the *personally responsible citizen* on the *What Kind of Citizen Survey* by Westheimer and Kahne (2004), over 90 percent of youth agreed or strongly

agreed with the qualities of the *personally responsible citizen* (Table 3). Of the remaining item, 84.7 percent of youth agreed or strongly agreed with *keeping the community clean and safe is something I feel personally responsible for.* All of the youth (100%) agreed or strongly agreed with items: *I think it's important for people to follow rules and laws* and *I try to be kind to other people*.

Table 3: What Kind of Citizen: Personally Responsible Citizen

Question	Strongly Disagree %	Disagree %	Not Sure %	Agree %	Strongly Agree %
I think people should assist those in their lives who are most in need of help.	0.0	3.8	3.8	34.6	57.7
I think it's important for people to follow rules and laws.	0.0	0.0	0.0	30.8	69.2
I try to help when I see people in need.	0.0	0.0	3.8	34.6	61.5
I am willing to help others without being paid.	0.0	0.0	8.0	40.0	52.0
Keeping the community clean and safe is something I feel personally responsible for.	3.8	11.5	0.0	46.2	38.5
I try to be kind to other people.	0.0	0.0	0.0	57.7	42.3

Participatory Citizen

The participatory citizen has an increased understanding of and sense of responsibility for his or her community. He or she is an active member of the community, arranges efforts for community improvement and is motivated to change the community. The participatory citizen also has an understanding of government and shared ideals or identity (Westheimer & Kahne, 2004b). According the *What Kind of*

Citizen? measurement, youth participants were less sure about their role as a *participatory citizen*. On three of the four items relating to the values of the *participatory citizen,* 80 percent of youth or higher agreed or strongly agreed (Table 4). However, in response to the statement, *Being actively involved in state and local issues is my responsibility*, 11.5 percent of participants disagreed, 30.8 percent were unsure and only 57.7 percent agreed or strongly agreed. This response may reflect youth perceived inability to and be involved in government.

Table 4: What Kind of Citizen: Participatory Citizen

Question	Strongly Disagree %	Disagree %	Not Sure %	Agree %	Strongly Agree %
Being concerned with national, state and local issues is an important responsibility to everyone.	0.0	0.0	7.7	46.2	6.2
Everyone should be involved in working with community organizations and local government on issues that affect the community.	7.7	0.0	7.7	50.0	34.6
I think it's important to get involved in improving my community.	0.0	0.0	8.0	32.0	60.0
Being actively involved in state and local issues is my responsibility.	0.0	11.5	30.0	30.8	26.9

Justice-Oriented Citizen

Like the participatory citizen, the justice-oriented citizen also seeks to improve the community. Unlike the participatory citizen, the justice-oriented citizen works to develop the community by questioning authority, looking for causes of injustice and promoting social change (Westheimer & Kahne, 2004b). The justice-oriented citizen demonstrates a higher moral purpose. Responses to the items relating to the *justice-oriented citizen* on the *What Kind of Citizen?* measurement were less consistent than the *personally responsible citizen* and *participatory citizen* items. All youth agreed or strongly agreed with the statement : *I think it's important to work for positive social change.* Response rates for agreed or strongly agreed for the other five questions *c*orresponding with the *justice-oriented citizen* ranged from 42.3 percent to 74.6 percent. Many more youth responded with not sure in this section of the survey. This may indicate that youth are still forming awareness of issues of justice within society (Table 5).

Table 5 : What Kind of Citizen: Justice-Oriented Citizen

Question	Strongly Disagree %	Disagree %	Not Sure %	Agree %	Strongly Agree %
I think it's important to challenge inequalities in society.	0.0	0.0	42.3	23.1	34.6
I think it's important to think critically about laws and government.	3.8	0.0	34.6	23.1	38.5
I think it's important to protest when something in society needs changing.	0.0	3.8	11.5	34.6	50.0
I think it's important to buy products from socially responsible businesses.	3.8	3.8	50.0	30.8	11.5
I think it's important to work for positive social change.	0.0	0.0	0.0	48.0	52.0
When thinking about problems in society, it is important to focus on the underlying causes.	0.0	0.0	30.8	46.2	23.1

The baseline data indicates that while the youth have a basic understanding of what is a citizen there are important differences between their perceptions of personally responsible, participatory and justice oriented citizenship. Subsequent findings from the journals and interviews will explore and report on the intricacies of how the UP-BEAT youth perceive citizenship and the role the program has on their perceptions of social justice.

What Are the Roles and Responsibilities of Citizenship?

Based on the journals and interviews data several themes emerged under the first research questions. The UP-BEAT youth felt that citizens must partake in *Responsible Activities,* have a positive *Character,* participate in community *Involvement/Activities,*

and have a *Motivation to Make a Difference*. In addition the youth discussed the roles that youth can play in citizenship through *Youth Power*.

Responsible Activities

Youth comments overwhelmingly suggested the belief that a good citizen is first a responsible person. Harrison felt that good citizens and the responsible person perform many similar activities and stated, *Responsible people are usually good citizens cause being responsible is usually doing things that good citizens do. Yes…* (Journal).

Laura also felt that good citizenship meant first being a responsible person, suggesting that not being a responsible person could result in negative consequences for the individual and the community and therefore be contrary to the meaning of good citizenship.

> *Yes it is related [being a responsible person and a responsible citizen] because to be a good citizen you must be a responsible person. If you arn't responsible what will happen? Nothing good ever comes from not being responsible. It hurts other people around you* (Laura- Journal).

Clearly, youth recognized the correlation between good citizenship and being responsible. When asked what kinds of things good citizens do, youth continued to discuss characteristics of the *personally responsible citizen*. The focus of these comments fell into two board categories: *Responsible Activities* and *Good Character*.

Youth felt that as citizens they could help to improve the community by being involved in basic activities expected of a responsible person. These activities included: *cleaning litter, caring for nature, improving community health, voting and paying bills,* and *following laws/ making good decisions.*

Cleaning Litter

When asked what behavior good citizens do, the activities youth talked about the most revolved around litter and physically cleaning their communities. Youth focus on keeping their community clean reflected their sense of pride and loyalty to where they live. It also represents an activity that youth are very capable of performing with little or no adult help. Mary reflected that picking up litter is a simple act anyone can and should do. She felt that the cleanliness of a community directly affects the quality of life for its residents.

> *Or if you're just like walking around your neighborhood and you see trash on the street, just pick it up!* (Mary -Interview).
> *Other people it goes For also. , your self the nieghbors, people that live in your community. For them to litter is not good. Its not helping + making the community A better place* (Mary - Journal).

Jessica also discussed the importance of picking up trash. She recognized that when a person litters it influences the entire community as well as the way others see the community.

> *Because, it's important because you live there and you have to see it every day. And like if you see people like going around polluting the area that you wanna live there, that you live to see everyday, you don't want to see it like in bad condition. You wanna see it like at its best. So you should keep it clean and looking nice* (Jessica - Interview).

The importance of picking up litter is a value that is discussed in many arenas of youth life: school, church, media. Youth discussed its significance at length. Youth also emphasized picking up trash as an important but separate aspect of caring for nature.

Caring for Nature

Youth demonstrated concern for the welfare of the environment. Caring for nature and animals was an important characteristic of a good citizen for youth participants. Like cleaning up litter, youth related caring for the environment to having pride for the place you live. They also related it with issues of public health and safety. Laura is often melodramatic in how she demonstrates her passion for various issues. This characteristic of her personality is apparent in her concern for the cleanliness of the environment and its relation to the health of people.

> *Our world now isn't the safest place for children and clean enough for our world to be clean and healthy. If we don't keep our environment clean we will eventually be forced to leave Earth and find a new planet to live on* (Laura- Journal).

Youth suggested a wide range of activities to address environmental issues. For example, Max, who generally showed great concern for his family and friends, suggested ways to improve his neighborhood by improving the environment.

> *Recycle Bottles Cans Plastic ect. I would wanna have a go green Day were you plant flowers And tress all day And flowers help our community* (Max-Journal).

Youth focus on the health of the environment most likely connected to current societal trends to go green as well as previous school lessons. However, it is also an issue that youth can easily recognize in their everyday lives and that they have some power to control or affect change.

Improving Community Health

Youth comments also suggested that youth believed being a good citizen involved promoting healthy living and active lifestyles in their communities. This

included being personally healthy. However, the focus of the UP-BEAT program, promoting physical activity, could have influenced participant answers. Kelly suggested that it is the responsibility of good citizens to help the community to be healthy. *Helping the nieghborhoods staying healthy, safe, more unless trashless* (Journal). Other youth focused on the responsibility of good citizens to participate in personal health activities. For example, Gillian suggested that good citizens, *Get into community groups like sports or activities* (Journal). Likewise, Sammie said that citizens should join *health programs, weight programs, no gain programs* (Journal).

The difference between being personally healthy and promoting others to be healthy was often difficult to distinguish. Some youth associated their own health with that of their family and friends. Youth discussed their worry for the health of family and friends and the need for family and friends, including themselves, to be healthier.

Voting and Paying Bills

Youth recognized voting and paying bills as important responsibilities of citizens. Unlike previous activities youth did not discuss voting or paying bills as activities for community improvement, rather as required citizenship activities. Voting was listed as an important activity in many youth journals

While voting is a citizenship responsibility that is often emphasized in a democratic regime, paying bills is not. However, youth indicated that paying bills is a important responsibility of a good citizen. Kara placed an added importance on being

financially responsible by describing a good citizen as someone who is -*Not in debt – Are responsible with bills and stuff* (Journal).

Paying bills and voting in elections were understood to be obvious responsibilities of good citizens. Youth clearly understood that these were activities they would participate in as adult citizens. Interestingly, youth did not mention paying taxes as a responsibility of a good citizen. Paying taxes could be categorized as an activity related to paying bills.

Following Laws / Making Good Decisions

Laws are not always easy to follow. Youth agreed that a good citizen should follow the law. However, they disagreed on whether or not it is ever appropriate to break the law. Youth opinions included: a) it is never acceptable to break the law, b) breaking the law is okay in an emergency, and c) breaking the law is okay if it is a minor law.

Haley, Gillian and Erica all suggested that laws are created for the good of the community and breaking a law has negative consequences. They felt that there are always alternative solutions to breaking a law.

> *The most important characteristic of a good citizen is their abilities to follow laws. I think this is because if they didnt follow the laws they could go to jail or prison* (Haley- Journal).

> *It depends what kind of law to break. If there is a law it is probably a reason for it. Laws are made to keep the community safe and for certain reasons* (Gillian-Journal).

> *no. never. I don't think that it is right to break the law I would try to find a different way to handle things with out breaking the law* (Erica - Journal).

Max's family had serious financial struggles during his participation in the program; as a result, he showed great concern for being able to provide for his family financially. For Max, a threat to his family or financial security is an emergency.

> *[If] my father wa dieing I would speed the highway to see him. If I had to get to my job in 15 mins I would speed to the shop so I wont lose my job* (Max - Journal).

Sammie was also from a low income family. She had a great appreciation for how much work it took for her family to be able to buy things.

> *Going on some one's property to get my ball *I am not going to leave it in someone else's yard, my mom bought the ball and it cost a lot of money and that is saving money instead of buying another one* [Talking about Trespassing] (Sammie -Journal).

Youth's perceptions about the importance of obeying the law were greatly influenced by their socioeconomic background and their resulting experiences. For example, Sammie's comment reflects that having to replace a lost ball would be a burden to her family. Similarly, Max rationalized that breaking the law was acceptable if it would prevent the loss of income. In general, however, youth felt that obeying the law was an important characteristic of a good citizen.

Education

Many youth suggested that education, both through formal schooling and informal experiences, helps to create citizens that are well informed and capable members of the community. Youth recognized formal education as a means or requirement to being a leader in the community. Formal education was also

distinguished as a means to get a good job, make money and financially support themselves as well as the community.

Sammie discussed the importance of education to become a leader in the community. She felt that being a leader by having an education would allow her to have more power to do things she felt needed to be done within the community.

> *Yes, it is good to have a education, study, go to school, get a degree, and be a leader to other people?..-Do it because it's good? it be great to have some kind of edcaution. When you graduate it enables you to do alot of good things you want to do and need to do* (Journal)

Jordan recognized education as a means to get a good job and the financial means to affect change in the community.

> *It is important to have a degree or some kind of education to have a good job and be able to make money and help others* (Journal).

Youth were able to easily identify the pathway of formal education: high school diploma followed by a college degree. Informal education, on the other hand, was described as more fluid, occurring through experiences within community interactions. Laura especially discussed the importance of informal education through experiences in the community. She felt that being involved in the community would help to keep her informed about what was going on in the community.

> *To get involved in community activites because if you do you will know more when you get older and that will make you a better citizen*
> *Also if you get a job in the city board you will know more about the city troubles which will help you not to do something that will trouble the city* (Journal).

For some extremely low-income youth, such as Max the most important experience youth could have to prepare to be good citizens was to provide for their families. Max responded *Kill a dear or something to feed my family* (Journal).

All youth cited education as an important characteristic of good citizenship. However, there were differences in opinion about what role education should have on the actions and decisions of a good citizen. While many youth advocated for the importance of education for citizens, others seem to recognize that opportunity for education is not equal, and lack of education does not indicate poor citizenship. Interestingly, youth seemed to assume that individuals with education were good citizens. However, youth clearly felt that education, both formal and informal, was a way to get power and voice in the community.

Character

Youth described attributes of good character as important elements of good citizenship. Youth indicated that a good citizen has a prosocial orientation: caring for those in need, demonstrating integrity and showing pride and loyalty for his or her community. By demonstrating these qualities, Lauren felt she could encourage others to do the same.

> *I also think that when you join these things, what goes around comes around, and when someone sees you doing something for someone, that person passes that kindness to someone else* (Journal*)*

Positive Attitude

Many youth participants indicated that a positive attitude is an important characteristic of a good citizen. According to youth, a good attitude influences others as well as empowers the individual. Anna indicated that a good citizen is *Always happy* (Journal). Bill felt that one's attitude reflected how other people viewed you as a person and as a citizen. He stated that a good citizen is *happy, because it makes you look good* (Journal). Gillian extended the idea of positive attitude and being happy to include a willingness to be helpful and available to others.

I think the most important characteristic of a good citizen is being nice, outgoing, helpful, and available (Journal).

Helping and Caring for Others

Helping others has had a long tradition in the United States. Strong neighborhood associations, volunteerism and altruism have been important values since the colonial period. For some, UP-BEAT provided an opportunity to experience helping others they did not know. According to Erica, a good citizen is, *Loving Cares for others* (Journal). Similarlly, Mariella stated that being a good citizen meant, *Being kind to all people* (Journal). This sentiment is echoed by Brandy who described good citizens as *Someone who cares about you, your family and your community* (Brandy- Interview).

The youth experience in the UP-BEAT YHL program helped youth to visualize themselves working to help the community in the future. Lauren provided the best description of the importance of helping others in the community.

UP-BEAT is a really inspirational experience because it actually makes you want to help other people whenever you are just alone in the

> *community and not with this group* (Lauren-Interview) She goes on to say:
> *I think it is important and I think it is important because well maybe not a lot of people say "Oh well there's already people out helping," and say everyone says that but there's actually not everyone helping. So, you actually want to get out there and do it* (Lauren - Interview).

Helping others was recognized as an important quality of citizenship in general. However, youth recognized the importance of helping others in part through their experience in the UP-BEAT Youth Health Leadership program.

Honest and Trustworthy

While honesty and trustworthiness are often considered qualities of a good person, youth also identified them as important characteristics of good citizens. Kara felt that honesty was a characteristic that corresponded with other important characteristics of a good citizen.

> *I think the most important characteristic of a good citizen is honesty. If you break a law and are honest it will be beter. But if you are honest you really shouldn't break a law. Most honest people I believe are smart people and nice. But still they could be a bad citizen* (Journal).

Haley also discussed the importance of being honest and trustworthy. Haley recognized that an honest and trustworthy person is someone the community could rely as reflected in her statement, "a good citizen needs to be kind and trustworthy...because: if you are not kind and trustworthy, no one would actually call you a "good citizen ☺" (Journal).

Pride and Loyalty

In today's political climate nationalism can often have a negative connotation. However, patriotism, or devotion to one's country, is often regarded as an important

characteristic of citizenship, regardless of the polity. For youth, pride and loyalty were a clear characteristics of a good citizen. Youth suggested that a good citizens must have a commitment to their country that is demonstrated though a sense of devotion and belonging. Jordan stated that to be a good citizen one should *be proud of your country* (Journal). Similarly, Haley described good citizens:

> *They (heart) everyone in their community and respent their people they live w/ and around and (heart) to be an American* (Journal).

Involvement /Activity Equals Good Citizenship

Youth clearly identified involvement as an important identifier of good citizenship. Involvement in community fits clearly into the description of participatory citizenship. It suggests youth willingness to take citizenship one step beyond the responsible citizen by actively seeking opportunities to work on improvements to the community. Lauren was one participant who felt strongly about the connection between involvement and citizenship.

> *-I think that the most important characteristic of a good citizen is one who gets involves in the community* (Journal).

Mary also recognized the importance of involvement, but she also felt strongly about noninvolvement. She humorously cites those individuals who do not get involved in their communities as lazy.

> *I think it is important* [to get involved]. *And I think it's important, because uh some of 'em they're not even doing nothing with their lives, so they might as well just get involved with the community* (Interview).

Youth perceptions indicate that they consider citizenship to be a role one must actively pursue with a sense of purpose and commitment.

Youth Power

Youth began to recognize their own role and the concept of responsibility as they went through the process of discussing citizenship. Youth perceived themselves as having good ideas and being capable of making positive change in their communities. Youth comments indicated a sense of empowerment and civic efficacy. Comments seemed to suggest the possibility that youth, because of their unique position within the community, may be able to affect positive change in ways others cannot. Haley felt very strongly about the power youth could have in a community. She approached community change through youth participation enthusiastically and passionately.

> *I feel everybody can. All you… you don't have to do something really big, you just have to do something. You can just walk out one day and say, "I'm going to do something to help my community," and you can do something really great* (Interview).

Kara recognized the unique voice youth have within the community. She suggests that because youth are not often asked their opinion, youth expressing their opinions can attract a lot of attention within the community.

> *They* [youth] *can do a lot because if a lot of youth get together um you can change stuff because it will get the people's attention* (Interview).

Youth sense of empowerment grew during the UP-BEAT Youth Health Leadership Program. Many youth began to feel that using their unique position within

the community they had the ability to make changes. However, as will be discussed later, youth also recognized their marginalized position within society.

Youth Motivation to Make a Difference

Overall, youth discussed at great length a desire or motivation to improve their communities. Youth suggested many ways in which they could have an impact. Some of these included*: taking action, expressing ideas engaging others, showing leadership* and *promoting teamwork.* Youth demonstrated a desire not only to be involved in community activities and improvement, but to assist in organizing and motivating others.

Taking Action

Action is the most obvious method for making a difference or a change in the community. Youth were able to list many activities they felt good citizens could organize in an effort to improve their communities. These activities differ from the activities of the *personally responsible citizen* as youth indicated a desire to organize or begin the effort for change. Lauren listed several strategies for promoting community change.

> *I Also think that youth (or upbeat) can help by haveing fundraisers, or help vote, or protest, or incourage, those decisions for our community* (Lauren-Journal).

Gilliam expressed an exceptional understanding of the process of community change in her recognition that positive community change should begin with a careful assessment of the community.

> *and helping evaluate the communities and seeing what we can do to make it better* (Gillian-Interview).

Expressing Ideas

Youth felt that they had unique ideas adult leaders in the community may not think of and recognized their responsibility to find ways of expressing their ideas. Many youth, such as Gillian, recognized that expressing ideas was exactly what they were doing in the UP-BEAT Youth Health Leadership Program. *And we are expressing our ideas to help the community* (Gillian- Interview). Erica was excited that youth ideas had the power to influence decisions made in her city.

> *By making good suggestions They (youth) could help make good decision by say there should be more protection Around two cities* (Erica-Journal).

Youth participating in the UP-BEAT Youth Health Leadership program were told frequently by program leaders and city officials that their work would make a positive impact on the community. However, if the suggestions made by the youth in the UP-BEAT Youth Health Leadership Program do not result in changes in the community, youth perceptions of the power of expressing ideas could be negatively affected.

Engaging Others

Youth recognized the importance of connecting with others to make community improvements. According to youth, connecting with others was an important part of citizenship for two reasons. First, as Max expresses, it provides an outlet for different community opinions to be expressed. *ask people what changes do you want in your community* (Journal) Second, engaging others may motivate others to get involved in community improvements. *They should help others because it motivates others to help*

and they will probably help others later and more often (Journal). Brandy expressed ideas to engage others to produce a collaborative comradery within her neighborhood.

> *Well first I would throw A block party to get the community together And Ask them What do they think we need to improve in an little community* (Journal).

Brandy recognized what many other youth articulated, improvement and change necessitates a shared scheme and joint action which is not possible without involving others.

Showing Leadership/Teamwork

While leadership and teamwork in some ways appear to be contrary concepts, when asked about their ability to change the community, youth often discussed leadership as relates to teamwork. Perhaps due to their limited power as citizens in their community, youth associated teamwork with the ability to be a good leader and affect change. Kara discusses the relationship between leadership and teamwork in youth leadership programs.

> *I think that dang learership programs like student council and other group activities actually can make you a good or better citizen. If you work in groups it teaches you to work together with other people* (Journal).

Both leadership and teamwork were identified separately by youth as well. Jessica defines leadership as a means to persuade others into a certain action or opinion, while Lauren discussed teamwork as a means to establish a collective will or opinion.

> *The most important charateristic of a good citizen is leadership because is important to lead others into doing the right thing to do* (Journal).

> *or get together to make decisions on what needs to be done in this community* (Journal).

For some youth, the most important characteristic of a good leader was the ability to provide a positive example to others by working in a group.

> *Yes Well not by myself, but maybe a few people behind me, some witnesses or whatever helping me out (* Interview)

Youth understood a definite relationship between leadership and teamwork in the role of citizenship. Their observations may have suggested that youth also recognized that both skills were needed for youth, whose abilities to act are often constrained, to affect change in their communities.

Who Is Responsible?

Interestingly, while most youth agreed that a good citizen is someone who is personally responsible, of high moral character, works to clean the community and the environment and actively helps others, they disagreed on who is responsible for making the community a good place to live. Erica and Mary felt that it is everyone's responsibility, including their own.

> *All citizens are responsible because everyone is an important part of the U.S.A* (Erica-Journal).
> *everyone is responsible for making it a good place. Everyone* (Mary-Journal).

Dan, however, recognized a hierarchy of responsibility that begins with every community member and increases with elected officials.

> *The voters are responcible for chossing good represenitives. the representive are responcible for making the right choices. This applies to both the USA and the community* (Journal).

Other youth indicated that it is someone else's responsibility to make sure the community is a good place to live, most often suggesting the government. Gillian did not feel personally responsible, but did indicate that the decisions of those who are responsible directly affect her life.

> *Presidents, represenitives and many others that look after the community. and it is very important for them to do our job because it could interfere with how we live* (Journal).

Mariella on the other hand, did not feel any personal responsibility. However, this opinion sharply contrasts her willingness to be involved and work to improve the community.

> *no. I dont think my community is any of my responsibility … I believe the PResident should be responsible for making our communities safe for us* (Journal).

Youth may feel disconnected from the political process that is often responsible for many decisions that are made within the community. This could result in the belief that the good of the community is someone else's responsibility.

Influence of Program on Perceptions of Justice

The second research question examined youth responses concerning issues of justice and how they were directly influenced by their experiences in the UP-BEAT YHL program. The structure, activities and adult interactions created by the program exposed youth to new injustices in society or reinforced injustices youth already recognized. Youth recognized social injustices based on new experiences and exposure to new environments in during the UP-BEAT YHL program. Youth also discussed

frustration about the prejudice against youth. Many of these frustrations were based on adult-youth interactions during the program.

Exposure to New Environments and Experiences

Although youth largely did not relate good citizenship to issues of social injustices within society, when discussing their experiences in the UP-BEAT Youth Health Leadership program, youth did begin to identify inequalities they observed through experiences in the UP-BEAT program. While youth did not discuss the importance of fighting these injustices, the first step is the recognition of these problems. Youth cited two occurrences within the UP-BEAT program that allowed them to recognize social injustices: *exposure to new environments* and *exposure to new experiences.*

Exposure to New Environments

During the UP-BEAT Youth Health Leadership program youth were exposed to new neighborhoods and other environments such as city council chambers and even new cities. New environments prompted youth to engage in activities and conversations about the differences in communities and the possible reasons behind those differences. For some youth, The initial bus tours of the Lincoln and Neal neighborhoods and interviews with the residents was the first opportunity they had to go to disadvantaged neighborhoods and talk with residents about the community. These youth compared the disadvantaged neighborhoods to their own and questioned why differences existed between the neighborhoods. These differences were emphasized even more during program activities that discussed what an ideal community should look like and included

an examination of elements located in an ideal community and those observed for the program. A few of the youth in the program were residents of the disadvantaged neighborhoods the program targeted. These youth were able to provide the group with a firsthand understanding of the positive and negative aspects of living in that community. For example, one youth participant, Jessica, lives in one of the targeted communities. She described the close connections between neighbors and problems with loud college parties.

Lauren had never been exposed to the poorer areas of her community. She was surprised to learn that some areas did not have access to the same amenities she had in her neighborhood.

> *I've learned that a lot of places aren't like your neighborhoods, sometimes they may be worse, sometimes they may be better. You never know* (Interview).

As Dan points out the exposure to the differences in community neighborhoods prompted youth to begin examining inequalities in other neighborhoods. During the program, he became acutely aware of subtle disparities in the community, and was constantly brainstorming ways to make improvements.

> *I'm really looking at the communities that I see more. Seeing if they have any problems* (Dan- Interview).

During the UP-BEAT Youth Health Leadership program, exposure to disadvantaged neighborhoods made some youth and parents who had little contact with such areas uncomfortable and some parents felt that youth needed increased supervision in these environments during the program. As such, many parents volunteered during the

community walkability assessments in the two neighborhoods. Their volunteering included walking as an adult leader with the children as they completed the assessment forms. This provided the youth an opportunity to expose their parents to new environments and discuss with them what the youth saw in terms of injustices. In addition, the inclusion of parent volunteers led to interaction between adult and youth residents.

Interactions with peers from different backgrounds during the program helped youth to feel more comfortable in the new environments and prompted a greater desire to understand the reasons for differences in communities. These new environments prompted new comparisons within youths individual lives and led to new learning opportunities to expand their cultural knowledge base.

Exposure to New Experiences

The differences in youth backgrounds fostered meaningful conversations about the reasons behind disparities. Youth also interacted with neighborhood residents and discussed their viewpoints and concerns. Youth realized that people living in poorer neighborhoods had many of the same concerns and values as they did. From these experiences youth began to recognize that people from disadvantaged neighborhoods were people like anyone else, but their neighborhoods and concerns sometimes did not get as much attention as other neighborhoods.

Youth also interacted with city representatives. Through these interactions, youth learned the differing opinions and attitudes about the same neighborhoods and problems. Youth were also impressed by how perceptions of a particular neighborhood changed

based upon the different governing bodies (city planning board versus the city council) they were talking to. For example, when talking to the Bryan Parks and Recreation Board, youth were surprised to find that most of the members were unfamiliar with the targeted neighborhood even though it has a large park and a community recreation center that is overseen by the board

Participants slowly began to recognize social injustices in the community and to discuss how new experiences, such as interactions with different kinds of people, were important to foster this kind of education, specifically between social and economic classes. Mary felt that new experiences with different kinds of people and places were an important aspect of civic education for youth. Mary seemed to recognize that there are inequalities in the "world" and suggested that in order for youth to make change, they must first understand what changes need to be made.

> *Getting out &exposed. Because they [youth] need to see how the world is, and if they see how the world is they will be able to make a change* (Mary- Journal).

Laura made a similar observation. She expressed that through new experiences provided by the UP-BEAT Youth Health Leadership Program, she was able to recognize that sometimes neighborhoods receive more attention from people in power based on how wealthy they are.

> *You have to work with different people or try new things you know. You can have a lot of new experiences* (Laura- Interview).

> *I mean I've learned a lot of new things. And I've learned that some people show more attention to the neighborhoods that you know are more*

> *.. have more people, that are more rich than the people who aren't as poor* (Laura- Interview).

New experiences and exposure to people from different backgrounds can have an effect on the way one understands the world. Youth in this study demonstrated that new experiences can also assist youth in the recognition of social inequalities in the community.

Development of Higher Moral Purpose

Through the exposure to new environments and new experiences, youth began to form opinions about interactions in the city and the community. The UP-BEAT YHL program offered a forum for youth to discuss what they observed and experienced. The program engaged youth in difficult discussions on topics such as: *What are characteristics of an ideal community? Why are some neighborhoods nicer than others? What leads to health inequity? What should a neighborhood have to promote health? and Should communities have the same characteristics?*

As youth realized the differences in neighborhood characteristics, they slowly broadened their spheres of thought to include others and new populations of people they didn't regularly interact with. While many youth focused primarily on their own neighborhoods, as discussions continued youth began to make important observations and ask difficult questions. For example, youth asked why some neighborhoods received more attention and money than other neighborhoods. The broadening of youth viewpoint resulted in youth realizing a need to consider others opinions and viewpoints. For example Laura said,

> *Um, everything's not about me. It's about other people, not just me. It's about a whole bunch of other people* (Interview).

Haley admitted that she didn't think about other people or how others lived before her experience in the program. She discussed that she hoped this new understanding will help her to consider different opinions and to become more informed about problems in her community.

> *I really didn't think about other communities before. Like I really didn't think about how other people might feel in their communities. And now I really do…*
>
> *Um I hope to be more knowledgeable and like being able to understand things better, being able to understand how people might feel about something that's different from my opinion* (Interview).

Youth concern with needs and opinions other than their own demonstrates the development of a higher moral purpose. While youth did not discuss the need for include action, the acknowledgement of other's problems is the initial step toward action. This concern for others directly addressed youth acknowledgment of disparities of voice and power in the community.

Disparity in Who Has Voice and Power

Youth recognition of some of the social injustices occurring within the community through exposure to new experiences and new environments encouraged questions about who has the power to make decisions and affect change in the community. The UP-BEAT YHL program provided opportunities for youth to learn about city government and citizenship advocacy. Using knowledge about city government and experiences in new communities, youth began to identify those in the community whose voice and power were limited and to advocate for equality. Youth

seemed to easily identify with those who lack power and voice in the community. This may reflect youth frustration with their own marginalized ability to voice opinions and affect change in their environments. Gillian and Jessica demonstrated this concern by expressing the importance for all citizens to have an equal voice in the decision making process.

> *Decisions should be made making sure everyone has an input with the opion. To make it fair* (Gillian-Journal).

> *I think we should allow resedents to vote on the decisions before they are made* (Jessica-Journal).

While adults may recognize the impracticality of Gillian's and Jessica's suggestions, the girls are addressing an important point, that although we may live in a democracy, everyone's opinion is not necessarily heard, and some opinions have more influence than others.

Power Based on Education

During interactions and activities in the targeted limited resource communities, youth recognized that those with limited power and voice were often those with limited education. Though youth discussed the importance of education to good citizenship, some youth suggested that limiting power to participate in civic issues based on education was unjust. Youth recognized that those without education often had limited power and voice within the community. Youth did not recognize some of the reasons why those with limited education also often have limited power and voice, but they did express concern with placing more value on the educated members of the community.

Dan suggested that although he felt education was important, making it a requirement to participate in civic engagement is against the values that the United States is founded upon.

> *but people should learn to be good citizens but to go to school and to take tests over it goes aginst basic american ideals* (Dan- Journal).

Jordan connected the ability to pursue education with economic status. He felt that those in society who lacked opportunity should not be penalized.

> *Citizens should not have to have a degree in order to be a citizen because some people cant afford it and colleges cant give scholarships to every single person that does good in school* (Jordan-Journal).

Similarly, Kara recognized that people have different reasons for not pursuing education which does not mean they are not good citizens.

> *I don't think everyone should [have to be educated] some people stay at home others are already good citizens* (Journal).

Youth clearly discussed the importance of education to citizenship. However, they also criticized the tendency for those without education to have little voice or power within the community.

Youth Limited Power and Voice

Youth voice and ability was an ongoing struggle throughout the UP-BEAT YHL program. The program director and program coordinator worked to provide youth with as much freedom to express their opinions as possible while still satisfying the committee of the over arching UP-BEAT grant who managed the funding for the project. Adult committee members had a specific idea of what and how the youth group should accomplish its goals. Adult committee members often attended UP-BEAT YHL

trainings to assist with scheduled trainings and activities. Youth opinions and style of expressing themselves were often very different from committee member expectations. As a result the program director and program coordinator were often forced the mediate between the two groups. This mediation most often resulted in changing youth plans and opinions while trying to maintain their authentic youth voice. For example, youth PowerPoint presentations created to use during presentation to city groups contained very bright colors in their background. Adult committee members felt this was inappropriate and distracting. The adult volunteers continually criticized the presentation due to its background colors. Many of the youth felt frustrated and were upset with the continual criticisms. In addition, during a youth practice presentation, Marielle described a problem in the community regarding park attributes using the word "sucks." Committee members immediately pronounced that the word was inappropriate. Mariella replied, "but it does suck." These are just two examples of the continual struggle between allowing the youth to be authentic in their voice, leadership and power in comparison to the adult world that is filled with rules and protocols. The UP-BEAT YHL program was intended to help youth feel empowered to make changes in their community. However, youth participants were expected to interact as adults in an adult forum using adult words, rules, protocols and opinions. Youth participants felt frustrated at the manipulation of their ideas and opinions to make it suitable for adult arenas, such as city council presentations. Some youth questioned why their participation was even necessary for the program if projects they completed were going to be manipulated by adults.

As a result of the youth adult interactions, many youth wished the group could have participated in community service projects instead. They felt a community service project, such as painting or planting flowers would have been an activity they would have been allowed to complete without adult interference.

Youth frustration with adult relationships was not limited to program management. During the culmination of the UP-BEAT YHL project, youth made presentation to several city groups in Bryan and College Station (i.e., City of Bryan and College Station Parks and Recreation Board, Planning and Zoning Board, and City Council). Youth felt that adult members of the various groups did not take their concerns and recommendations seriously. They recognized the patronizing overtones of their interactions with the members of the city groups. Several youth expressed frustration because they did not think the boards would consider the recommendations that youth proposed.

Youth Limited Opportunity

Alazzi (2009) discussed that as youth, young people are expected to conform and behave as adult citizens while at the same time they are expected to question and challenge authority. Youth in the UP-BEAT program expressed their frustration in their ability to participate in civic life and to be taken seriously as members of their communities. For example, Dan said, *I do everything I can, which is almost nothing* (Journal). Gillian pointed out that the communities are missing out on an important resource by not involving youth.

> *The youth should also be included in these decisions because we have great ideas and are growing up in the community* (Gillian-Journal).

Jordan recognized the importance of including youth in an effort to create better informed adult leaders in the future. He also suggested that youth have a stake in what is occurring in the community now, because they will have the responsibility of dealing with the ramifications of decisions made today in the future.

> *Youth are the ones that will eventually become president, governer or in other offices so they would also need to know what goes on in their community* (Jordan - Journal).

In some instances, according to Dan, youth have the best knowledge about the challenges and barriers. Therefore, youth opinions and ideas should be considered.

> *In the school systems, they're [youth] the ones that are sitting in the classrooms, so it's—they probably are the ones that know what's going on and they should have a greater say in what's happening to the schools* (Dan-Interview).

Perhaps Dan best described the primary obstacle to youth participation in citizenship.

> *I'm not sure about that [youth can be involved in community]. It is possible… It is possible, but adults don't listen to kids. It's just difficult* (Dan -Interview).

Dan's comment suggests that perhaps the solution to engaging youth in citizenship is not in youth schooling or programming but in the education of adults.

Youth Questioning Authority

Youth were asked if it is important for citizens to question authority. Many youth responses reflect a desire to confront authority figures they believe are wrong as well as a fear of the consequences of challenging a person with authority over them.

Youth struggled to decide whether citizens should question those in authority and how one could question authority while remaining respectful. It was difficult for youth to conceive of having the power to question adult authority figures. When asked about questioning authority figures, some youth suggested that leaders, from teachers to government officials, would not purposely misdirect their constituents. Mary was one participant who placed great trust in leaders.

> *Um…unless you feel deep down in your gut that something just don't feel right, but besides that, I don't think they'll tell you anything wrong* (Mary- Interview).

However, many youth, such as Dan, did express the importance of questioning authority figures. *Yes, otherwise they're [citizens] just following them mindlessly and they're not citizens* (Dan- Interview). In response to the interview question "Should citizens question their leaders?" Dan felt that questioning authority is warranted. Those youth who did feel it was necessary to question the actions and opinions of authority figures, went to great lengths to express the importance of remaining respectful. Lauren went so far as to describe a very polite dialogue she would have with a leader she thought was wrong or behaving inappropriately.

> *If I knew it was wrong, I'd say "but is that really a good choice?" If they'd say "yeah I think it is," I'd be like "well I really don't think so." I woudn't want to be disrespectful or rude, but I'd tell them that it would be the wrong thing to do. I'd tell them how and why it's the wrong thing and I'd hope they'd understand* (Lauren- Interview).

Some youth described using a scale of how wrong they considered an action to determine whether or not they would listen to an authority figure they thought was

wrong. Kara's explanation of what she would do does not include any intentions of persuading the authority figure. Kara also suggested that she might comply with a request she thought was wrong if it wasn't extremely wrong.

> *Um well, if a teacher told me to do something I thought was wrong, I wouldn't back talk, but I would just explain to them I thought it was wrong, and I would probably not do it if it was really bad* (Kara-Interview).

Youth have rarely experienced a situation in which the adult leader or authority figure did not hold power over them. Their responses reflect years of being taught to respect and listen to their elders. In fact, many youth frustrations about the adult influence on youth ideas during the program were not expressed until a debriefing session held after the program was over. During this session, the Program Director and Program Coordinator were the only adults present. Youth were asked directly what frustrations they had with the UP-BEAT YHL program. Even during the debriefing session, youth were hesitant to make frank complaints about adult leadership in the program. Youth complained that their ideas didn't fit into the vision of program leaders. They also commented that their vocabulary and vernacular was not accepted by adult leaders. Youth seemed to indicate that often within the program, they were unable to voice their opinions in a meaningful way that would affect the program activities and goals. For example, several youth suggested that UP-BEAT YHL should host a community clean up day in the targeted neighborhood. However, because a community clean up day did not fit within the predetermined program goals based on grant requirements, the idea was not included in the program.

Voting

To youth the most obvious right they are denied is the right to vote. Most youth felt that young people had good ideas and should be allowed to express those ideas at the polls. Haley was confident that youth can make positive change through voting.

> *Decisions should be made w/ a vote (children included)*
> - *They can make a BIG diference* (Haley-Journal).

Laura indicated a need for a separate vote based on community needs and decisions in which youth should be able to participate. This is an interesting observation. Youth tend to be more engaged in citizenship at the community rather than the sate or nation level and may be more apt to notice changes at the community level that affect youth.

> *You should have a community vote where if you are 12 or older you should be able to vote* (Laura-Journal).

Is it reasonable to ask youth to participate in citizenship but not allow them to vote on issues that directly affect them?

Chapter Summary

According Westheimer and Kahne's (2004), *What Kind of Citizen?* survey, youth most highly identified with the items relating to the personally responsible citizen. To a lesser degree, youth also recognized the characteristics of the *participatory citizen*. Survey results suggest that youth are less likely to recognize characteristics of the *justice-oriented citizen.*

Youth qualitative perceptions of the roles and responsibilities of citizens largely reflect the need for basic personal responsibility. Youth in this study were especially concerned with the need for citizens to care for the environment by picking up litter and recycling. Youth also demonstrated a desire for citizens to promote community health and organize efforts for community improvement. They suggested that good citizens should be of high moral character, pursue education and be willing to help others.

The structure of the UP-BEAT YHL program directly affected youth recognition of perceptions of justice. New experiences and environments experienced by youth during their participation in the program helped youth to recognize disparities in power and voice by prompting questions and discussion. Conflict between youth and adult relationships also provoked youth frustration of their own lack of power and voice in their communities. Youth found the inability of adults to take their work and opinions seriously to be a severe constraint to their participation in citizenship and government.

CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Introduction

This study was designed to examine youth understandings of the roles and responsibilities of citizenship as opinions were being developed in a youth civic engagement program. In addition, the study hoped to determine the programmatic influence on youth perceptions of justice and citizenship. The data collected in the study also had implications on whether youth consideration for citizenship and other issues of civic efficacy have waned in recent years as some critics have suggested.

Theoretical Discussion

Although the small size of this case study limits the ability for data to be generalized into theory, it does suggest that the theory of youth citizenship is incomplete. Westheimer and Kahne (2004) demonstrated that youth are capable of addressing social justice issues. Youth in this study were able to recognize social injustices when given the opportunity to observe and experience them. However, youth lacked the critical thinking skills necessary to analyze these issues. Similarly, Westheimer and Kahne (2004) found that youth were able to understand political structures but needed help to navigate them. Similar to other research studies (Glaser, 1985), youth did not possess the critical assessment skills necessary to be a *participatory citizen* or a *justice-oriented citizen* without the direction of adults. Future research should address how and when youth develop these assessment skills.

The most significant finding of this study was the barrier of adultism for youth participation in citizenship. Adultism is defined as behaviors and attitudes based on the assumption that adults are better than youth. Literature discusses many barriers to youth participation: instability, economic insecurity, lack of interest (Arnett, 2000; Banks, 2008; Beauvais, et al., 2001; Finlay & Flanagan, 2009; Hall, et al., 1999; MacDonald & Marsh, 2004; Wattenberg, 2008) but the role of adultism is never mentioned. The youth who participated in this study were interested in participating in citizenship but were frustrated by their lack of power within the community and the political structure. They recognized the patronizing tone adults in the community and political system used to talk to them. Adults often appeared more enthusiastic about the work the youth had completed than youth ideas for future community change and improvement. Future research should address youth perceptions of adult belief of the ability of youth and how it affects youth decision to participate.

Relationship to Citizenship Literature

The findings of the UP-BEAT Youth Health Leadership Case Study reflected much of the literature on youth citizenship. According to Hall, Coffey and Williamson (1999) the *narrow definition* of citizenship is the legal membership to a specific government entity and the rights and responsibilities that result from that membership. Although youth did talk about the importance of voting, youth in the UP-BEAT YHL program rarely discussed citizenship in terms of their membership to a political entity but rather as a member of a community or neighborhood. Youth recognized that they had few rights as members of their neighborhoods or communities. However, youth did list a

number of responsibilities they had in their communities. Many of the responsibilities youth discussed related more to Hall, Coffey and Williamson's (1999) *normative definition* of citizenship which is the role of individuals within a polity based on a similar understanding of ideals and identity. Youth understandings of citizenship often related to a specific location. For example, youth discussed the importance of helping others in the community and keeping the community clean.

Banks (2008) created levels of citizenship that closely corresponded to the Westheimer and Kahne (2004) citizenship framework. Youth comments of citizenship did not reflect Bank's first level of citizenship, *legal citizenship. Legal citizenship* refers to legal membership to a nation-state and the obligation to follow laws of that state or submit to the consequences. Youth did not mention legal membership as an important element of citizenship. There may be several reasons for this. Youth may consider legal status an obvious characteristic of a citizen, or youth do not consider legal status an important element to citizenship participation. Youth did consider following laws an important aspect of citizenship.

The next level of citizenship according to Banks (2008) is the *minimal citizen*. The *minimal citizen* participates in local and national elections. Youth considered voting an important and somewhat obvious duty of a citizen. *Active citizenship* is to "support and maintain – but not to challenge – existing political structures"(Banks, 2008, p. 136). Many youth identified with this idea of citizenship. Youth listed citizenship activities such as picking up litter and getting an education as responsibilities of a citizen. Youth responses to questions about citizenship often reflected the training they have received

about a young person's role within society to work within rules and structures that have been established for them without disobeying authority figures.

The final level of citizenship for Banks (2008) is the *transformative citizen*, who recognizes injustices and works to change current structures that cause these injustices. For many UP-BEAT YHL participants, the UP-BEAT program was the first time they were able to recognize injustices within their community. The injustices they recognized were based upon their experiences in the program. Youth did not demonstrate more than a desire to correct these issues.

Youth Development Framework and Citizenship

When discussing youth participation in citizenship, it is imperative to remember the context citizenship activities have within the many elements of youth lives. Likely, the waning participation of youth was not due to a lack of interest or caring, but rather due to the many responsibilities, feelings, hormones, problems, possibilities, hopes and plans that consume the lives of youth. Youth participating in the UP-BEAT YHL program were dealing with a wide range of pressures and distractions in addition to school work and extracurricular activities. Some issues included parental pressure to perform both academically and athletically, preparing for rites of passage, development of basic social skills, standardize testing, and romantic and social dramas. All of these additional elements were occurring while youth are developing mentally, emotionally and physically. In the midst of the jumbled emotions and expectations, it seems unrealistic to expect youth to fight to participate in a political system that they recognize affords few rights to youth.

Other scholars have suggested that when youth come to the age of full adult citizenship, they may not yet be acting as adults economically, socially, educationally, and developmentally (Alazzi, 2009; Andolina, et al., 2002; Bobek, et al., 2009; Hall, et al., 1999). These characteristics may limit the ability of youth to participate in citizenship activities. For some scholars, this trend is increasingly problematic due to the recent theory of the emerging adult which suggests that many youth of industrialized countries are putting off the responsibilities of adulthood in exchange for freedom and exploration (Arnett, 2000; Beauvais, et al., 2001; Tonge & Mycock, 2009). To the contrary, however, the youth in this study were found to be taking on adult responsibilities and concerns at an extremely early age. Where youth of past generations were more likely to be shielded from adult problems, these youth were not only exposed but in some cases taking on the responsibility of helping family and friends to negotiate adult circumstances. Some of the more extreme adult issues youth in the UP-BEAT YHL program experienced included: family financial struggles, domestic violence, sexual relationships, abuse, and homelessness. These stressful situations directly affected youth perceptions of citizenship. For example, when Max was asked what the most important experience youth could have to prepare them to be good citizens he responded, "Kill a dear or something to feed my family." Max's idea of citizenship closely mirrored the concerns and fundamental needs of his family. Max felt a huge responsibility to take care of his family. For Max, this stress was so prominent that he was unable to consider more traditional citizenship responsibilities.

Even youth who were not experiencing major turmoil were participating in traditional adult activities such as: caring for younger siblings, providing meals, and serving as counselor for emerging sexual relationships with peers. The understandings of citizenship for these youth were not constrained by a desire to prolong youth. However, the exposure to adult situations may have constrained youth from participation in citizenship as their focus was adverted to more pertinent situations in their lives.

Youth Power and Marginalization

Youth in the UP-BEAT YHL program recognized their limited rights within the political structure. While youth did not suggest that the marginalization made them feel inadequate, as other studies have indicated (Kymlicka & Norman, 1994; Thomson, et al., 2004), some youth did describe a sense of ineffectiveness that led to frustration or disinterest. For example, when Dan was asked what citizenship activities he participates in, he responded. “I do everything I can, which is almost nothing.” Youth are very aware of adult uncertainty in their capabilities as well as their limited power to express opinions and affect change, even on issues directly affecting youth lives. Youth acknowledged that they are not given the freedom to influence much of what occurs in their lives. This trend among UP-BEAT YHL participants mirrors the writing of Kymlicka and Norman (1994) who found that when rights are withheld, individuals or groups do not feel capable of acting as citizens. Youth participation in citizenship requires youth to act as adults while in society they are not treated as adults (Beauvais, et al., 2001; Hall, et al., 1999). It therefore seems unrealistic for youth to defy adult

expectations, think critically about the environment they are given little power to influence and participate in a political system that affords them few rights.

Youth in the UP-BEAT YHL program indicated a frustration that adult leaders of the program as well as volunteers and officials that interacted with the youth were unwilling to allow them to express themselves in the manner they wanted. Youth expressed that they felt like the adults were putting words in their mouths. In fact, some youth complained that they did not fully understand the vocabulary the adults were asking them to use. This adultism continued to occur even as youth reported the findings of their study to city groups in the community. All city boards interacted with youth in a very patronizing manner. Youth were very aware of the patronizing tone adults used to talk with them. This became very frustrating for youth and contributed to feelings of not accomplishing anything. Some youth cited inability to make improvements by advocating to city groups as a reason the group should focus of small community service projects in the future. Interestingly, youth made one presentation about the UP-BEAT YHL program itself to a group of youthworker professionals. This presentation remained the favorite and most successful presentation of the program since the youth professionals interacted with youth as equals.

Influence of Race and Income on Perceptions of Citizenship

The UP-BEAT YHL program strived to make the opportunity available to youth of all backgrounds by refraining from charging a fee to join and by providing transportation and food. The result was a good mix of socio-economic backgrounds. Studies by developmental psychologists (Bandura, 1997; Hamm, 2001; Kirshner, et al.,

2003; Wagmiller, et al., 2006) have indicated that minority and low-income youth populations may feel estranged from their communities due to a lack of opportunity for social bridging through participation in institutions other than school. This is suggested to cause low levels of civic efficacy and civic participation. The UP-BEAT YHL participants defied this idea. Over half of the participants in the UP-BEAT YHL program came from minority and or low-income families. Many of these youth participated in many other extra-curricular activities and had close social connections to members of their community. Youth participants from low-income or minority families often provided the most insightful reflections on issues of justice and political influence within their communities. Some of these youth also had the most dedicated civic identities and greatest commitment to their ability to make a difference. Many of these youth were involved in multiple organizations or activities whose goals focused on community engagement and improvement. According to the characteristics of the UP-BEAT YHL participants, it seems the literature largely discredits the civic efficacy, motivation and commitment of minority and other special youth populations.

Studies seem to suggest that the sense of estrangement from community is due to a lack of opportunity to participate in institutions outside of school because of a lack of resources (Bandura, 1997; Hamm, 2001). While many of the participants in the UP-BEAT YHL program may have lacked resources, for many it did not limit the participation in community based activities and relationships. Those couple of youth whose family situations prevented them from participating in other community activities

and relationships showed even more intense dedication to the program and the relationships they made as a result of participation.

Youth Organizations and Youth Perceptions of Justice

Overall, youth perceptions of citizenship were not influenced by a desire for justice. As similar research efforts discovered, youth largely define citizenship in terms of being a responsible person, demonstrating good character and volunteering (Alazzi, 2009; Andolina, et al., 2002; Westheimer & Kahne, 2004b). However, youth did recognize social injustices when discussing their experiences in the UP-BEAT YHL program. The recognition of social injustices did lead to an analysis of probable causes, but the youth rarely discussed possible solutions. That is not to discount the youth recognition of these problems. Many social injustice issues have a deeply complicated history and no clear solution. What is more concerning is that youth did not discuss issues of injustice in relation to the responsibilities of citizens. Youth only mentioned such problems when talking directly about the social injustices they saw as a result of experiences in the UP-BEAT YHL program. In other words, while youth acknowledged issues of injustice, they did not directly relate those issues to their own citizenship responsibility. If the expectation is that youth understand citizenship as the desire to solve social problems by correcting the causes of injustice (Figure , Level 31), youth must first be able to recognize injustices. Youth should then be able assess the causes of those injustices in relation to their role as citizens of the society in which those injustices occur.

Citizenship Education

One explanation proposed by scholars for the waning youth involvement in citizenship activities is a shift in youth understanding of citizenship from the national stage to a community based, personally responsible citizenship (Alazzi, 2009; Andolina, et al., 2002). Youth involved in this study focused primarily on activities and responsibilities of citizenship that fell into the personally responsible understanding. For youth participants, these activities and responsibilities were community based. While lack of youth concern for aspects of citizenship such as social injustices or national and international politics is a concern, it may be that the process of socialization or education into citizenship is shifting as influences on youth change.

It seems that if youth acknowledge injustices in the community in relation to their experiences in an organized youth civic engagement program that purposely worked to expose participants to these issues, then participation in such programs may be one method of promoting critical assessment of justice by youth. This finding reflects the finding of Westheimer and Kahne (2004a). Although focusing on the education system, Westheimer and Kahne (2004a) found that students involved in a class project that focused on advocating community activism expressed a desire to address problems collectively and an increased interest in politics and justice. However, they did not demonstrate increased knowledge or civic efficacy. Conversely, students in a class designed to promote active citizenship experienced an increase in knowledge and civic efficacy but not interest in government or structural issues. Clearly, youth perceptions of citizenship and the role of justice are directly influenced by education. The best

educational experience for a knowledgeable, active citizen who seeks solutions of injustices must fall somewhere in between.

However, these educational experiences may not be suited for the classroom environment where youth are largely subject to rules and standards beyond their control (Beauvais, et al., 2001). Youth groups, such as UP-BEAT YHL, provide an environment in which youth are able to be involved in the decision making process and experience different roles within collaborative efforts. This may be why some studies suggest that youth participation in group activities as an adolescent is a predictor of civic participation as an adult (Boyte & Fretz, 2010; Youniss, et al., 1997). However, it is important for youth groups to realize the experiential education they provide may be beyond the immediate goal of the program. For example, the goal of the UP-BEAT YHL program was to advocate for policy change in low-income neighborhoods to promote physical activity. However, through both formal and informal educational experiences within the program, youth civic identities and perceptions of citizenship were changed and modeled. In this way, youth civic engagement programs can begin to provide opportunities for youth to explore issues of community and justice while developing knowledge and a sense of civic efficacy.

If a program is hoping to engage youth who are more than simply personally responsible citizens, perhaps it is more practical to encourage the development of an awareness of societal inequalities and the critical thinking skills to assess these inequalities. The data collected in this study suggests that youth can recognize social injustices when exposed to new experiences and environments. However, they may lack

the critical assessment skills necessary to determine why and how injustices occur. Very few youth within the program were able to make the connection between inequalities within the community and why those inequalities might exist. Critical thinking skills could have been further encouraged by asking youth why something is the way it is more frequently. The UP-BEAT YHL program succeeded in helping youth to recognize social injustices and to place themselves and their family within context of the social and economic hierarchy of the political system. The program also succeeded in exposing youth to people of different social economic backgrounds, increasing the ability of youth to see people as individuals similar to themselves rather than as stereotyped group.

Guiding Framework – Westheimer and Kahne (2004)

Westheimer and Kahne (2004) descriptions of characteristics of different levels of citizenship provides a frame of understanding on which to compare perceptions of citizenship. The framework includes basic common characteristics of citizens in three levels: *Personally Responsible Citizen, Participatory Citizen and Justice-Oriented Citizen.* Youth participants of the UP-BEAT YHL program largely described the characteristics of the *Personally Responsible Citizen and the Participatory Citizen,* although youth responses tended to be more specific and situation oriented. Youth understandings of justice were less comparable to Westheimer and Kahne (2004) *justice-oriented citizen*.

Personally Responsible Citizen

Most youth responses fell into the Westheimer and Kahne (2004) description of the *personally responsible citizen* (Table 6). Youth demonstrated the belief that good

citizens have good character, try to maintain the community and make an effort to pay bills and follow the law similar to Westheimer and Kahnes framwork. Youth did not discuss the importance of volunteering. However, several of the activities they did mention could be interpreted as small scale, individual volunteering project, such as encouraging others to be more healthy and picking up litter in the community. Youth broke character down into more specific elements than the Westheimer and Kahne (2004) model. Descriptions of high moral character could also indicate that youth had shared identity or ideals. According to Westheimer and Kahne (2004a), shared identity of ideals is a characteristic of the *participatory citizen*. The United States of America has long placed value on behaviors demonstrating high moral character, such as: patriotism, participation in associations, volunteerism and integrity. It is arguable whether these are elements of high moral character (a characteristic of the *personally responsible citizen*) or shared identity/ ideals (a characteristic of the participatory citizen).

In addition, youth discussed the responsibility of good citizens to care for the environment and to clean up litter. These two categories of citizenship responsibility accounted for a majority of youth responses. However, youth only discussed caring for the environment and picking up litter on a local level, not in terms of a larger global responsibility. Youth also indicated that pursuing an education was an important responsibility of citizenship. Education, for youth, helped to created citizen who were capable of completing their citizenship responsibilities.

Table 6: Youth Perceptions of Personally Responsible Citizenship

Personally Responsible Citizenship	
Westheimer and Kahne	**UP-BEAT YHL Youth**
Obey laws	Following laws
Pay bills	Voting/ Paying bills
Volunteer	Clean up litter Care for nature Improve community health
High moral character	Character: Positive attitude Helping/Caring for others Pride and loyalty
Believe in honest/ integrity	Character: Honest and trustworthy
Not Discussed	**Education**

Participatory Citizen

UP-BEAT YHL participants understanding of citizenship also mirrored some of the elements of Westheimer and Kahne (2004) *participatory citizen* (Table 7). Youth revealed a strong belief in the importance of being active in the community. They demonstrated a strong motivation to make a difference in the community. Youth discussed at length examples of how youth as citizens could facilitate community change. Many of these examples reflected a willingness to arrange efforts for community improvement as well as a shared understanding of place. Youth motivations also suggested a shared identity with other members of the community. Part of youth motivation to work for community improvement reflected their belief in the power of

youth to make change. Westheimer and Kanhe (2004) do not discuss youth sense of empowerment within their communities, but youth identity as citizens is directly affected by their belief in their ability to affect change. Youth did not mention an understanding of government as an important element of citizenship. This could be because many youth discussed citizenship activities at the neighborhood level.

Table 7: Youth Perceptions of Participatory Citizenship

Participatory Citizenship	
Westheimer and Kahne	**UP-BEAT YHL Youth**
Active member of community	Involved and active in community
Understanding of government	Not Found
Arranges efforts for community improvement	Motivation to make a difference: Action Expressing ideas Engaging others Leadership/ Teamwork
Motivation to change a community	
Shared identity/ ideals	Not Found
Shared understanding of place	Not Found
Not Discussed	Youth Power

Justice-Oriented Citizen

The majority of perceptions of citizenship of youth in the UP-BEAT YHL program did not reflect *the justice-oriented citizen* (Westheimer & Kahne, 2004a). Youth comments did suggest a need for citizens to have a higher moral purpose. However, youth did struggle to identify the need to seeks out causes of injustice or promote social change. While most youth were willing to admit that it may be necessary to question authority figures, most emphasized the importance of being respectful and not getting

into trouble. Youth in the UP-BEAT YHL program had just begun to recognize social injustices in their community. Therefore, they were not yet ready to take the next steps: seek out the causes and promote change. Youth recognition of injustice issues directly mirrored their experiences within the UP-BEAT YHL program. For example, youth were concerned with the disparity in the facilities and cleanliness of the low-income neighborhoods they assessed compared to higher end neighborhood. This observation led youth to question who has voice and power in the community and who does not. The most obvious difference between those with power and those without for youth was education. However, the most prominent social injustice youth discussed was their own marginalization and lack of power within their communities. Specifically, youth were concerned with their limited opportunity to participate and express their opinions through voting.

Table 8: Youth Perceptions of Justice-Oriented Citizenship

Justice-Oriented Citizenship	
Westheimer and Kahne	**UP-BEAT YHL Youth**
Critically assesses authority	Questioning authority
Seeks out causes of injustice	Not Found
Higher moral purpose	Demonstration of higher moral purpose
Promotes social change	Not Found
Not Discussed	Recognition of social injustices Exposure to new environments Exposure to new experiences Disparity in who has voice and power Power based on education Youth limited power and voice Voting Limited opportunity

Overall, the perceptions of youth that participated in the UP-BEAT Youth Health Leadership program reflected what a good citizen *is* and what a good citizen *does* based on Westheimer and Kahne's description of the *Personally Responsible Citizen* and the *Participatory Citizen*. However, conceptions of citizenship and what constitutes a good citizen may need further construction (Table 8). For example, youth added the responsibility of good citizens obtaining an education. Is being well informed or educated a responsibility of a good citizen? While the UP-BEAT YHL program was not designed to direct youth perceptions of citizenship toward one specific kind of citizenship, it did include trainings and activities that direct participants critically reflect and design action items that reflect collective social action and social justice. Most

importantly the youth discussed the role of youth power and its ability to allow them to become actively involved in civic life. This may reflect an important constraint to youth ability to understand citizenship at the *justice-oriented* higher level.

Program Implications

This case study on the UP-BEAT Youth Health Leadership program has led to the emergence of several implications that can assist practitioners in youth voice, empowerment and engagement to assist in the development of justice-oriented citizens. Given that this was a case study with a small number of youth participants, care should be taken in the application of these recommendations. Nevertheless, the thick description of this case study's context provides the reader with enough information to make the decision on whether the findings are generalizable to their specific program. With this in mind, the following recommendations are offered:

1. Combine government and policy activities with community service projects.

   During a youth reflection period at the end of the UP-BEAT YHL program, youth complained that the projects completed by the program were all just talking with little or no action. While youth were performing important work as advocates for the targeted communities, not unlike the adults, they were frustrated by the time involved. Community service projects that had a visible end result would have helped youth to feel a sense of accomplishment.

2. Incorporate youth voice in a meaningful way.

Youth in the UP-BEAT YHL program complained that frequently their ideas or words were edited or changed to fit the goals of adult leaders. This produced feelings of frustration and incapability. Citizenship is based on participation. If youth are going to participate, they must be allowed to contribute in a way they can understand and that is meaningful to them.

3. Address issues of adultism.

   Adults that interacted with UP-BEAT YHL participants were often unintentionally patronizing. While it may be impossible to prevent issues of adultism from occurring, youth should be engaged in discussions about how these issues may affect them. Discussions may facilitate management of these issues.

4. Facilitate new experiences and exposure to new people and environments.

   Youth cited new experiences and new environments as the factors that helped them to recognize and consider new issues and injustices in their communities. Youth also suggested that the opportunity to make friends from different areas of the community was a factor that kept them committed to the program.

5. Secure funding that provides the freedom to consider youth needs first and foremost.

   The UP-BEAT YHL program was funded by a larger grant with a specific agenda that was not directly concerned with the development of youth civic identities. While the grant provided a unique opportunity for the youth

participants, it also made it hard for adult leaders to manage the program to provide the best possible experience for youth.

Future Research

A limitation of this study is the case-study approach. Further research needs to be undertaken to expand the current literature on citizenship and more specifically, youth citizenship. This can be accomplished in several ways:

1. Use different kinds of data collection to account for the different personalities of youth.

   The methodology for this study utilized journal writing both as a program activity as well as a means for data collection. The journals were meant to provide youth with an outlet to describe opinions and feelings without fear of negative peer repercussions. However, the youth viewed the journals as another school-like assignment. Many youth had lower than expected reading and writing skills. The journal writing quickly became a chore for youth participants. To supplement the information gathered from the journal writing, interviews were performed. In general youth responded more positively to the interviews and were generally more willing to elaborate about their ideas. However, several youth were uncomfortable discussing their opinions openly with adults. Using multiple forms of data collection will allow the researcher to gather the views of all of the youth participants.

2. Ask youth about their personal experiences and observations.

Journal questions in this study asked youth directly about citizenship, while interview questions asked youth more generally about their experiences in the UP-BEAT program. Youth responded better to questions about their personal actions than to more abstract questions about citizenship. In general, youth comments relating to social justice issues were generated from interview questions about their personal experiences in the UP-BEAT program.

3. Research should address development of critical assessment abilities in relation to understandings of citizenship and social justice issues.

   Literature does not discuss the formation of youth civic identities in relation to social justice issues. Continued research should examine the development of critical thinking skills related to youth recognition and assessment of social justice issues.

4. Implications of adultism relative to youth citizenship should be examined to determine additional constraints to youth participation.

   Youth in the UP-BEAT YHL program cited issues of adult superiority as a major constraint to their ability to express their concerns and opinions about their community.

5. If it is important to increase youth participation in citizenship, then research addressing constraints to youth participation should also address how youth feel they could best be involved in citizenship and the political process.

   As this study seems to suggest, youth may be forming their civic identities through their experiences and exposure to new environments. These new

experiences may also prompt youth to consider issues of injustice. However, for youth to become involved in new experiences and environments, they must be given opportunities that interest them and allow youth to be an integral part of the solution.

Conclusion

Discussion of past youth participation in citizenship often paints an idealized picture of past generations of youth who were involved in civic activities and aware of national political events. However, were the youth of past generations as a whole really recognizing and addressing societal injustices and problems? Or were they simply mirroring the civic identities that had been taught? Certainly, history has documented pockets of youth involved in a relatively small number of justice movements (the Civil Rights Movement, Vietnam protests and LGBT advocacy) many of which addressed threats to basic physical and emotional wellbeing. Perhaps we are judging the citizenship performance of today's youth based on a skewed perception of previous generations. Youth citizenship should be judge based on current influences, trends and realities of youth lives.

Youth are very capable of participating in citizenship in a meaningful way. They have unique opinions, observations and ideas. Youth action and advocacy can be powerful tools to motivate social change. However, we must recognize that as youth they are in the process of developing, and as their transformation into adulthood is incomplete so is youth formation of civic identity. Youth practitioners and educators have the responsibility to promote the expansion of youth civic identities to include the

characteristics of the justice-oriented citizen by exposing youth to social injustices and promoting critical thinking. Often youth have not been taught to think critically or to seek knowledge about issues, especially those issues that do not directly affect their lives. Nonetheless, most youth have little voice and power over decisions affecting them every day. We should not expect youth to fight to participate in a system that largely ignores them. It seems unrealistic for youth, even those who have participated in programs like the UP-BEAT YHL program, to develop *justice-oriented* civic identities. Not only is *justice-oriented citizenship* a standard most adults fail to reach, it is also a role youth are actively discouraged from in the systems in which they participate everyday.

If we truly seek youth citizens of high moral character who recognize and seek to solve injustices through critical assessment, then adults need to examine how youth are engaged in the programs and systems in which they participate. For example, it is unreasonable to expect youth to critically assess and work to fix injustices that may occur in society but not in school or youth programs. The development of youth citizenship identity, as with the development of other skills and identities, is a continuum. However, the resulting adult citizenship identity is necessarily affected by the experiences held during youth. To understand how youth should be engaged in citizenship as youth, we should first consider how we would like them to participate as adults.

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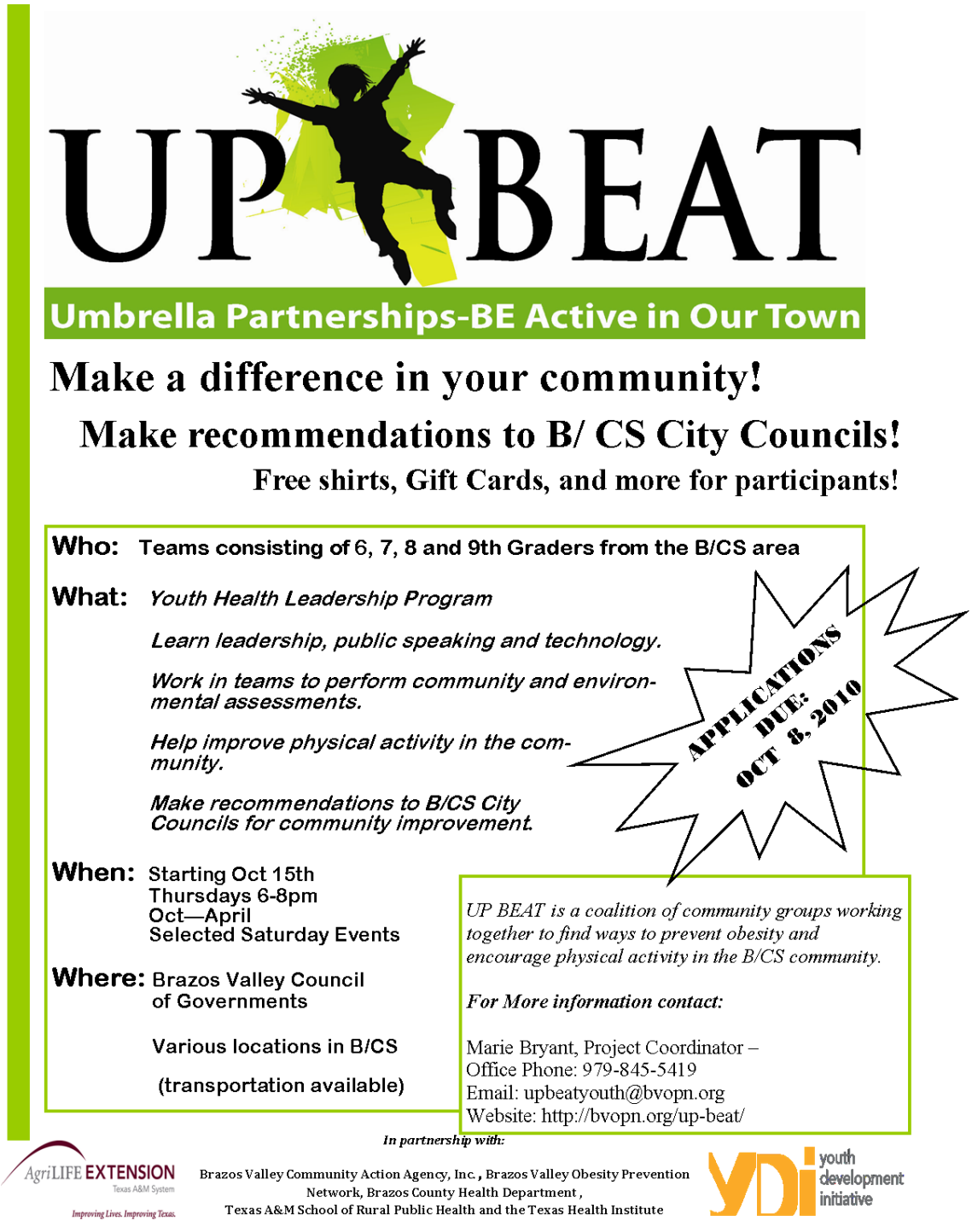
APPENDIX A


UP BEAT
Umbrella Partnerships-BE Active in Our Town
Make a difference in your community!
Make recommendations to B/ CS City Councils!
Free shirts, Gift Cards, and more for participants!
Who: Teams consisting of 6, 7, 8 and 9th Graders from the B/CS area
What: Youth Health Leadership Program
Learn leadership, public speaking and technology.
Work in teams to perform community and environmental assessments.
Help improve physical activity in the community.
Make recommendations to B/CS City Councils for community improvement.
APPLICATIONS DUE: OCT 8, 2010
When: Starting Oct 15th
Thursdays 6-8pm
Oct—April
Selected Saturday Events
Where: Brazos Valley Council of Governments
Various locations in B/CS
(transportation available)
UP BEAT is a coalition of community groups working together to find ways to prevent obesity and encourage physical activity in the B/CS community.
For More information contact:
Marie Bryant, Project Coordinator –
Office Phone: 979-845-5419
Email: upbeatyouth@bvopn.org
Website: http://bvopn.org/up-beat/
In partnership with:
AgriLIFE EXTENSION
Texas A&M System
Improving Lives. Improving Texas.
Brazos Valley Community Action Agency, Inc., Brazos Valley Obesity Prevention Network, Brazos County Health Department, Texas A&M School of Rural Public Health and the Texas Health Institute
ydi youth development initiative

APPENDIX B

What is UPBEAT?
Umbrella Partnerships-BE Active in our Town (UP-BEAT) will focus on policy and environmental changes that lead to maintaining a healthier weight and more active lifestyles. A goal of the UP-BEAT project is to involve area youth in the policy-making process to address future policy and environmental changes. The Youth Health Leadership Training Program engages youth in Brazos County.

What does the Youth Health Leadership Training Program consist of?
The premise of the program is that youth can be powerful catalysts for change making and have the power to motivate others to participate in civic affairs, drive informed decision-making and promote consensus among adults with different perspectives.

The program consists of **training 40 youth between 6th and 9th grade** to serve as community leaders by conducting community assessments that will identify needs and solutions to improve physical activity in the Brazos Valley. An essential part is to recruit a diverse range of participants and youth who are struggling or have unmet potential as leaders.

- CURRICULUM - The program seeks to support and train youth by providing tools to be effective agents of change in their communities. The curriculum has been designed as a comprehensive skills training program that provide opportunities to initiate confidence building and empowerment. Job readiness skills, career exploration, community involvement, civic engagement, and leadership skills development have been included. The following areas have been identified for training:

    - ***Public Speaking***
    - ***Leadership***
    - ***Technology*** (GIS, Video & Audio Recording/Editing, Podcasts, Webpage development, etc.,)

- ***Community Mapping*** (Walkability Assessment, Mapping Software and production)

- SPECIFIC ACTIVITIES - All activities are designed to help increase the visibility of the youth. Specific activities include:

  - ***Conducting interviews of community residents, business leaders or local elected officials***
  - ***A media review to track down articles, write press releases and engage local elected officials***
  - ***A community assessment based on scientific principles***
  - ***Presentations to city councils and***
  - ***Development of a refined action plan to advance youth and community priorities***

Who is responsible for the Youth Health Leadership Training?
The Youth Health Leadership Training Program is led by the **Youth Development Initiative** of Texas A&M University (www.ydi.tamu.edu) under the direction of Dr. Corliss Outley and Dr. Chris Boleman. Additional staff members include: Marie Bryant, (Project Coordinator), Laura Ramirez Mann, and Brandy Kelly.

When will the program meet?

The Youth Health Leadership Program will meet **every Thursday from 6:00-8:00pm** and on select Saturdays in the community. The program will begin October 14th, 2010 and end May 30th, 2011.

Who can I contact for more information?

For more information please contact Dr. Corliss Outley (Project Director) or Ms. Marie Bryant (Project Coordinator) at 979-845-5419 or email:

upbeatyouth@bvopn.org.

APPENDIX C

Youth Health Leadership Program Schedule
2010-2011

DATE/TIME/LOCATION	SESSION TOPIC
THURSDAY, OCTOBER 14th 6:00 pm – 8:00 pm at BVCOG	Orientation ***Who Am I?*** - Pictures
THURSDAY, OCTOBER 21st 6:00 pm – 8:00 pm at BVCOG	Introduction T-shirt design
THURSDAY, OCTOBER 28th 6:00 pm – 8:00 pm at BVCOG	What is Leadership? Pre-Assessment ***Who Am I?*** Web Posting
THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 4th 6:00 pm – 8:00 pm at BVCOG	Who Makes decisions in my community? Panel with CS/Bryan City Officials
THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 11th 6:00 pm – 8:00 pm at BVCOG	Health Inequities Using Photography and Video Recording Public Speaking
THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 18th 6:00 pm – 8:00 pm at BVCOG	Targeted Community Tours
THURSDAY, DECEMBER 2nd 6:00 pm – 8:00 pm at BVCOG	Photo & Video Visioning & Editing Interviewing Skills
THURSDAY, DECEMBER 9th 6:00 pm – 8:00 pm at BVCOG	Photo/Video Visioning & Editing
THURSAY, DECEMBER 16th 6:00 pm – 8:00 pm at BVCOG	Online Videos Posting **Holiday Party** **1st stipend/gift card**
THURSDAY, JANUARY 6th 6:00 pm – 8:00 pm at BVCOG	Health Inequalities **T-shirt Incentive**
THURSDAY, JANUARY 13th 6:00 pm – 8:00 pm at BVCOG	MS Office Basic Training Interview skills review Update Web Videos
MONDAY, JANUARY 17th Location TBA	MLK March
THURSDAY, JANUARY 20th 6:00 pm – 8:00 pm at BVCOG	Interviews with Bryan Community Residents
THURSDAY, JANUARY 27th 6:00 pm – 8:00 pm at BVCOG	Interviews with College Station Community Residents

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 3rd 6:00 pm – 8:00 pm at TAMU Location TBA	GIS Scavenger Hunt on TAMU campus
THURSDAY, FEBUARY 10th 6:00 pm – 8:00 pm at BVCOG	GIS Training **Tote Incentive**
THURSDAY, FEBUARY 17th 6:00 pm – 8:00 pm at BVCOG	Environmental Assessment Training Community Walk Training Interview Practices
SATURDAY, FEBUARY 19th 9:00 am – 3:00 pm at TBA	Community Assessment, Bryan
THURSDAY, FEBUARY 24th 6:00 pm – 8:00 pm at BVCOG	Findinfs Community Walk
SATURDAY, FEBUARY 26th 9:00 am – 3:00 pm at TBA	Community Assessment, College Station
THURSDAY, MARCH 3rd 6:00 pm – 8:00 pm at BVCOG	Community Walk
THURSDAY, MARCH 10rd 6:00 pm – 8:00 pm at BVCOG	Preparing PowerPoint Presentations
THURSDAY, MARCH 24th 6:00 pm – 8:00 pm at BVCOG	Performing a Persuasive Speech
THURSDAY, APRIL 7th 6:00 pm – 8:00 pm at BVCOG	Empowered Leadership Presentation Practice **2nd Stipend Gift Card**
THURSDAY, APRIL 14th 6:00 pm – 8:00 pm at BVCOG	Presentation Practice
THURSDAY, APRIL 21st 6:00 pm – 8:00 pm at BVCOG	Presentation Practice
THURSDAY, APRIL 28th 6:00 pm – 8:00 pm at BVCOG	Presentation Practice **(Final Presentation to B/CS Council TBD)**

*BVCOG – Brazos Valley Council of Government, 3991 E 29th St., Bryan, TX 77802-4228

*All Saturday meeting locations will be TBA (To be announced)

APPENDIX D

Youth Leadership Survey

UP-BEAT

We are pleased you are taking part in our Youth Leadership Activities sponsored by UPBEAT (Umbrella Partnerships—Be Active in Our Town). Thank you for being part of UP-BEAT activities.

We would like to know a little about the youth who have signed up for this program, and would appreciate you filling out this brief survey. The questions ask about your previous involvement in the community. We would also like to know about specific community activities that you have taken part in.

- It should take no longer than 10-15 minutes to complete this survey.
- There are no right or wrong answers—we just want to know what you think and how you have played a part in your community.
- All of your responses will be confidential.
- This survey is voluntary, but we would appreciate if you try to answer all of the questions. Your responses will help us design better training programs for youth.

Questions about UP-BEAT can be referred to:
Eleanor Ryder, Program Coordinator
Brazos Valley Community Action Agency Inc.
Contact: 979.595.1710 bvopn.org

PART I. Your Thoughts about Community Issues

We would like to know how you feel about community involvement and your role in dealing with community issues. Please check the box that best describes how you feel about the following community issues.

Community Issues	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Not Sure	Agree	Strongly Agree
I do not have the ability to change things that I don't like about my community					
I think people should assist those in their lives who are most in need of help					
I usually do not want to get involved in making decisions that will affect my community					
Everyone should be involved in working with community organizations and local government on issues that affect the community					
I think it's important to think critically about laws and government					
I feel driven to participate in community activities					
I think it's important to tell the truth					
When thinking about problems in society, it is important to focus on the underlying causes					
I think it is important to get involved in improving my community					

Being concerned with national, state, and local issues is an important responsibility for everybody					
Being actively involved in state and local issues is my responsibility					
I have the desire to be active in my community					
I try to be kind to other people					
I think it's important to work for positive social change					
I think it's important to challenge inequalities in society					
I try to help when I see people in need					
Community Issues	**Strongly Disagree**	**Disagree**	**Not Sure**	**Agree**	**Strongly Agree**
I am inspired by the goals of my community					
I am not able to influence the laws that govern my community					
I am enthusiastic about working towards improving my community					
I can influence the decisions that are made by the lawmakers in my community					
I am inspired by what we are trying to achieve as a community					
I am motivated to be involved in my community					

I do not feel a personal responsibility to participate in community projects					
Keeping the community clean and safe is something I feel personally responsible for					
I am enthusiastic about the contribution my work makes to my community					
I am keen on my community doing well					
I think it's important for people to follow the rules and laws					
It is important for kids in my community to be physically active					
The only reason kids in my community may not get enough physical activity is because they are lazy					
There is an adequate number of places and programs in my community to help kids be physically active					
I am willing to help others without being paid					
I think it's important to protest when something in society needs changing					
I know I can make a difference in my community					
I think it's important to buy products from socially responsible businesses					
It is important for local governments or schools to provide opportunities to support kids' physical					

activity					
I can influence community members to take action on important issues					

PART II. Your Involvement

There are many activities youth can engage in to make community changes. In the past twelve months have you been involved in any of these activities related to making a change in your community? **(CHECK ALL THAT APPLY)**

- ☐ Make contacts to mobilize support
- ☐ Participate in a community event for a specific cause
- ☐ Push for safer routes to school
- ☐ Conduct presentations on policies at local meetings
- ☐ Develop public signs and notices
- ☐ Participate in a fundraising activity for a specific cause
- ☐ Prepare or passing out information or materials for a specific cause
- ☐ Push for increasing walking in community
- ☐ Get a business to increase selling of healthy foods
- ☐ Push for an increase of playgrounds in the community
- ☐ Restrict unhealthy snacks/sugary and fatty snacks at school or in the community
- ☐ Push for physical education at school
- ☐ Voice a concern at a public event
- ☐ Obtain signatures for a specific cause
- ☐ Contact a political person
- ☐ Get other youth involved
- ☐ Not sure
- ☐ Other (Please List): _____

PART III. Your Skills

What skills would you like to develop? Read each item and circle the number that best describes how interested you are in developing that skill.

To what extent would you like to develop the following skills to promote active living?	**Not Very Much**	**Some**	**Quite a Bit**
Handling an interview with the media	1	2	3
Talking with policy makers such as a city council member or state legislator	1	2	3
Answering questions from others about active living	1	2	3
Being able to debate or discuss the policy with others	1	2	3
To what extent would you like to develop the following skills to promote active living?	**Not Very Much**	**Some**	**Quite a Bit**
Speaking to the public about active living	1	2	3
Knowing how to organize and participate in a signature drive	1	2	3
Mobilizing other youth to promote active living and healthy eating in the community	1	2	3
Getting money and support for active living	1	2	3
Promoting active living through media outlets: e.g. internet and/or newspapers	1	2	3

1. What is the most important skill you think you will develop as a result of your participation in UP-BEAT?

2. Are there any other skills you want to develop or improve to promote physical activity policy changes? Please explain.

3. What has been most helpful to you in getting the skills you need to push for policy change?

PART IV. Use of Digital Technology

1. How often do you access the internet? **(CHOOSE ONE)**
   - ☐ Multiple times a day
   - ☐ 4-7 times a week
   - ☐ 3 or fewer times a week
   - ☐ Once or twice a month
   - ☐ Less than once a month

2. Do you have internet connection in your home?
   - ☐ Yes
   - ☐ No

3. Where do you use the internet? (**Rank in order of frequency (1=most frequent , 4 = least frequent)**
   - ☐ Home
   - ☐ Work Place
   - ☐ Internet Café
   - ☐ School, library, or other free access point

4. Do you have a cell phone?
   - ☐ Yes
   - ☐ No

5. What features does your cell phone have? **(CHECK ALL THAT APPLY)**
   - ☐ SMS
   - ☐ Video
   - ☐ Camera

- ☐ E-mail
- ☐ Web browsing
- ☐ GPS

6. In your community, which tool do you believe is the most effective for promoting active living and healthy living? **(CHOOSE ONE)**
   - ☐ Face to face contact
   - ☐ Internet
   - ☐ Mobile phone
   - ☐ Both
   - ☐ Other (Please List): _____

7. Do you use digital technology to promote community change?
   - ☐ Yes
   - ☐ No

8. Please briefly describe a successful case in which you used digital tools to promote change in your community:
   _____

PART V. A little About Yourself

1. Which groups and organizations have you been involved in over the past twelve months? **(CHECK ALL THAT APPLY)**
   - ☐ Scouts (Boy or Girl Scouts)
   - ☐ Dance Team/Step Team
   - ☐ Political Groups/Organizations (Young Republicans/Democrats)
   - ☐ School Spirit Clubs/ Teams
   - ☐ Gymnastic Teams
   - ☐ Academic Club or Society
   - ☐ Cheerleading Team
   - ☐ Drama Club
   - ☐ Band, Orchestra, Chorus
   - ☐ Future Farmers of America
   - ☐ YMCA

- ☐ Faith based Activities e.g. church activities
- ☐ Sport Teams
- ☐ Chess Club
- ☐ Boys and Girls Club
- ☐ 4-H
- ☐ None
- ☐ Other (Please List): _____

2. Please indicate your gender:
   - ☐ Male
   - ☐ Female
   - ☐ Other (Please List): _____

3. What is your grade level?
   - ☐ 6th
   - ☐ 7th
   - ☐ 8th
   - ☐ 9th

4. How old are you?
   - ☐ 11
   - ☐ 12
   - ☐ 13
   - ☐ 14
   - ☐ 15
   - ☐ 16

5. What is your race/ethnicity? **CHECK ALL THAT APPLY**:
   - ☐ African American/ Black
   - ☐ Asian American
   - ☐ Hispanic/Latino
   - ☐ White/Caucasian
   - ☐ Other : _____

6. Do you take part in a free or reduced lunch program?
   - ☐ Yes

- No

7. How many adults live in your home?
   - 1
   - 2
   - 3
   - More than 3

8. How long have you lived in Bryan or College Station?
   - One year or less
   - Two years
   - Three years
   - Four years
   - Five years
   - More than Five years

9. What is the main language spoken in your household?
   - English
   - Spanish
   - Other (Please List): _____

10. What is the zip code of your home address? _____

APPENDIX E

Survey Name: Demographic Information

Instructions: The following questions will indicate particular information about you as a participant in the program. Circle the answer that best represents you.

1. Are you male or female? Male Female

2. What is your grade level? 6^{th} 7^{th} 8^{th} 9^{th}

3. How old are you? 11 12 13 14 15 16

4. What is your race/ethnicity?
   - African American
   - White/Caucasian
   - Hispanic
   - Asian American
   - Racially Mixed
   - Other

5. Do you participate in a free or reduced lunch program? Yes No

APPENDIX F

Survey Name: Experience of Group Work

Instructions: The following questions will indicated how many groups and organizations you have been involved over the past twelve months. Circle the group and organizations that apply to you.

1. Academic Club or Society
2. Performing Group
3. Faith-based Activities
4. Sports Teams
5. Band, Orchestra, or Chorus
6. Drama Club
7. 4-H
8. FFA
9. Chess Club
10. Scouts (Boy Scouts or Girl Scouts)
11. Dance Team
12. Cheerleading Team
13. School Spirit Clubs/Teams
14. Gymnastic Teams
15. YMCA
16. Boys & Girls Club
17. Political Groups/Organizations (Young Republican/Democrats)

APPENDIX G

Survey Name: What Kind of Citizen

Instructions: The following statements describe how you might feel about how people interact with their communities. Following the scale, strongly agree to strongly disagree, indicate how each statement relates to you.

1. I think people should assist those in their lives who are most in need of help.
2. I think it's important for people to follow the rules and laws.
3. I try to help when I see people in need.
4. I am willing to help others without being paid.
5. Keeping the community clean and safe is something I feel personally responsible for.
6. I try to be kind to other people.
7. I think it's important to tell the truth.
8. Being concerned with national, state, and local issues is an important responsibility for everybody.
9. Everyone should be involved in working with community organization and local government on issues that affect the community.
10. I think it is important to get involved in improving my community.
11. Being actively involved in state and local issues is my responsibility.
12. I think it's important to challenge inequalities in society.
13. I think it's important to think critically about laws and government.
14. I think it's important to protest when something in society needs changing.
15. I think it's important to buy products from socially responsible businesses.
16. I think it's important to work for positive social change.
17. When thinking about problems in society, it is important to focus on the underlying causes.

Likert Scale: Strongly Disagree (1), Disagree (2), Not sure (3), Agree (4), Strongly Agree (5)
Reliability: .85
Source: Westheimer, J. & Kahne, J. (2004). What Kind of Citizen? The Politics of Educating for Democracy. *American Educational Research Journal.* Vol. 41, No. 2, pp. 237-269. Adapted in Kahne, J. & Sporte, S. (2008). Developing Citizens: The Impact of Civic Learning Opportunities on Students' Commitment to Civic Participation. *American Educational Research Journal.* Vol. 45, No. 3, pp. 738-766.

VITA

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